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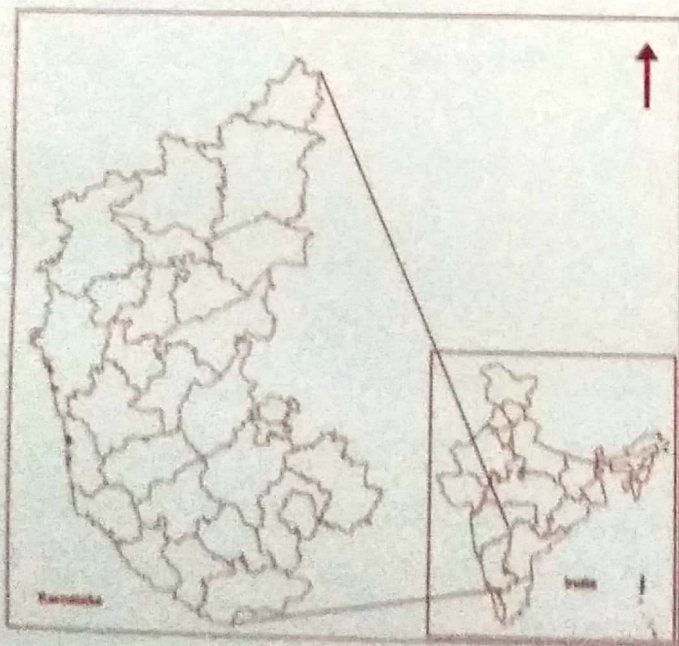
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BACKGROUND

In India varieties of plant and animal species have been considered sacred by one or other communities and therefore have a great reverence to the nature's creation. Since beginning of civilization people have shown enormous interest and respect to nature and conservation (Presler, 1971). The present day cry for preserving biodiversity to protect and conserve for posterity has its seeds sown several thousand years ago. The most widely protected of such organisms is the peepal tree (*Ficus religiosa*), found depicted on Mohenjodaro seal of around 2000 B.C Other species of the genus *Ficus* are also considered sacred. *Ficus* is a genus of particular significance in the overall maintenance of tropical biological diversity - a "keystone mutualist" (Gilbert, 1980). In particular, its preservation may have helped to maintain high levels of populations of frugivorous birds, especially pigeons and doves. Other plants and animals receive less universal protection, being sacred only in particular locations or to particular castes. The peafowl, for example, is sacred to Lord Kartikeya and is never hunted, and is consequently abundant around Kartikeya temples, in the Southern state of Tamilnadu. It is more widely protected all over the Western states of Gujarat and Rajasthan. The blue rock pigeon (*Columba livia*) is considered sacred to the saint Hazrat

Shah Jalal and is protected and encouraged to breed in artificial nest baskets in rural Bangladesh. Even the rodents are protected and abound in the famous temple of Karnimata Goddess in the state of Rajasthan



Many castes or clans within the castes have certain totemic plants or animals, which they do not destroy or let others destroy if they can help it. Thus, the Maratha clans of Mores and Ghorpades from Maharashtra

derive their clan names from their totemic animals - peafowl and monitor lizard respectively - and will protect these animals, although other clans of the same Maratha caste will hunt and eat them. By far the most remarkable example of protection to certain species is that of the Bishnoi sect of Western India ((Ishwar Prakash and Ghosh1980). This Hindu sect, founded in 1485 A.D. enjoins its followers never to cut a green tree, or kill any animal. They hold as specifically sacred the khejdi tree (*Prosopis cinerarea*), which is by far the economically most valuable tree in the desert tracts in which this sect originated. It is recorded that in 1630 A.D. three hundred and sixty three Bishnois sacrificed their lives to prevent the King of Jodhpur from cutting down these trees to furnish the fuel for the limekilns to build a new palace. The Bishnois also protect the wild animals including blackbuck and chinkara. To this day, the tradition is very much alive and the Bishnoi villages are a refreshing scene of greenery and plentiful wild life in the Indian desert.

Worship of plants or their parts is one of the earliest cultural forms of populations across the globe since ancient times. It was through the worship of the plants or animals that man attempted to please and adore the God. Before the advent of settled agriculture practice, he depended mostly on leaves, fruits and nuts of the plants. He used them as implements for peace and war. It was from wood that he obtained fire to cook his food and to warm his cave dwellings apart from the beauty of their flowers, which excited his imagination. It was beneficial influence of the plants that prompted our remote ancestors to worship them. The earliest form of worship was probably the veneration of the Mother Earth. Fertility, creation and the world of plants and animals were her blessings to her devotees. The worship of the plants would have originated somewhere at this time as the adoration of her creative abilities, symbolizing fertility so essential to the survival of early people. Worship of plants is found in various societies world over, especially in India. Besides, there is a belief that the plants, which are sacred or being worshipped that often have the medicinal properties.

There has been, of late, enormous interest in the study of nature conservation by traditional societies. The protection of patches of forest as sacred groves and several tree species as sacred trees belong to the religion-based conservation ethos of ancient people all over the world. Although such practices became extinct in

most parts of the world, basically due to changes in religion, and during recent times due to changes in resource use patterns, sacred groves and sacred trees continue to be of much importance in religion, culture and resource use systems in many parts of India. There are many references to the sacred groves and sacred plants of India in early literature;



however, the scientific study of them was initiated by Gadgil and Vartak (1975, 1976, 1981). Gadgil (1985) pioneered the view that sacred groves and sacred trees belong to a variety of cultural practices, which helped Indian society to maintain an ecologically steady state with wild living resources. This view has been fortified by many later studies (Gadgil, 1985, 1991; Gadgil and Iyer, 1989; Malhotra, 1990; Subash Chandran and Gadgil, 1998; and Joshi and Gadgil, 1991).

Another striking feature of the organization and knowledge in India is that it manifests itself at multiple levels ranging from the oral tribal and folk traditions to the written down classical traditions with its texts and theoretical framework. This is true of a range of knowledge systems from grammar, music, medicine, agriculture etc. In the world of medicine they have a corpus of large medical manuscripts and texts and scholars trained in disciplines of Ayurveda and Siddha. At the same time there are a large number of folk practitioners in the form of herbalists, traditional birth attendants, rich knowledge in the community about properties of food, adaptation of food and regimens to suit various seasons etc. Ayurvedic texts also acknowledge and accept knowledge of medical practices and herbs with the common folk. In fact, it can be seen that there are plenty of innovations still in the field that we witness in various areas such as medicine, agriculture and the use of materials.

This has important implications for the way in which we should conserve and carry out research. The research in India has an important role to reestablish the

symbiotic links that traditionally our scholars have had with the lay practitioners. This approach would indeed set a new direction for research in India.

All religions in the world have reference to plants and form a part of their culture and practice. The Bible mentions about 120 plants/plant products, the Qu'ran less than twenty. Most of the plants are familiar to us, and food plants which sustained the population right from pre agriculture era viz. barley, date palm, fig, garlic, grape, olive, onion, pomegranate, and wheat. The Indian culture shows reference to several hundreds of plants. Why the great difference in the number of plants? Is the difference in number of plants to relate to ecological differences between a largely Mediterranean influence, a desert habitat and the tropics? Many plants are also included in their list coming from other regions. Perhaps these are later additions as they were a part of trade and the widespread trade with other parts of the world brought exotic plants into local markets and became important components of their culture.

Many species of Zingiber (Ginger), Cinnamomum (cinnamon), mentioned in and Qu'ran is thought to be native to southern India. It was no doubt brought to the Middle East by traders and popular among Muslims. Cinnamon is mentioned in the Bible in several places and it is remarkable that ginger is left out. In the Qu'ran ginger is used in the same way it is today-to flavor drinks.



The culture of preserving the sacred plants leads to the culture of preserving the ecosystems of varied magnitude. Thus, patches of vegetation, few trees, or a whole forest area have been identified with sacredness. The term sacred grooves became one of the synonymous terms with the protection of sacred plants and their habitats.

Sacred groves, often dedicated to local deities or ancestral spirits, are found all over the Indian sub-continent and beyond to south east Asia. Protected from over-use by local communities because of traditions born out of religious beliefs, they have been preserved over many generations. Thousands of sacred groves have been documented, ranging from a few trees to forests of many acres.

Such sacred groves are of increasing interest to nature conservation because they help preserve threatened plants and animals. Fortunately, many sacred groves remain and have a linkage to the whole community of human habitations and help the villagers continue to observe their traditional practices. Environmentalists are working with local communities, recognizing that traditional knowledge and sacred practice are important elements in the conservation of the environment. The groves, besides harbouring plants and animals, are crucial for soil and water conservation forming micro habitats of importance to meet conservation needs.

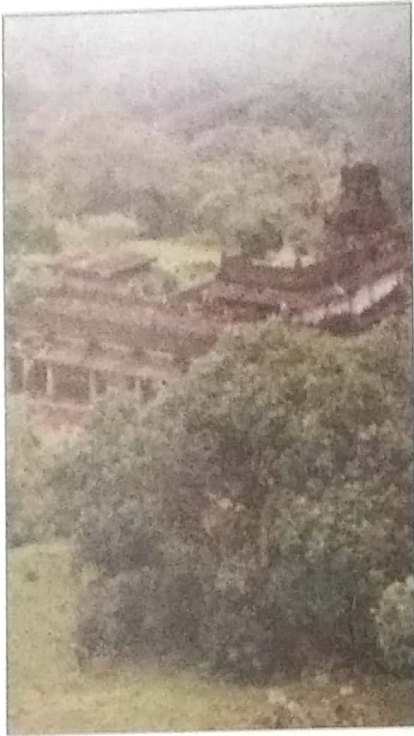
The Tribal knowledge

Many of these groves exist because of the cultural practices of indigenous peoples and various tribes of India. They may operate within the Hindu caste system, but maintain their own traditional beliefs which are pre-Vedic. Some of these tribes are the Soligas, Santals, the Coorgy, the Kudubi, the Bishnois, the Oraons, the Garos, Khasis, the Bhumias, and the Murias.

The Bishnois of western Rajasthan are a well-known example of the numerous tribes who venerate nature. Their name refers to the 29 principles of morality and conduct which their presiding deity Lord Jhamba devised. He was a historical figure of the 14th century. Compassion for all living beings was most important and it was stipulated that they were never to fell trees and kill animals. Khejri trees (*Prosopis cineraria*) and the black buck are particularly protected. The Bishnois' veneration of the khejiri tree has a practical aspect. It recognises the tree's usefulness in providing fodder, food and building materials.



The Indian cultural practice

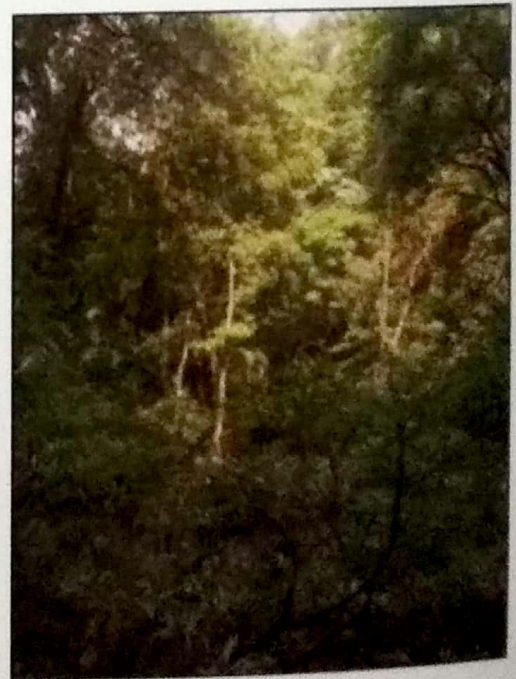


To promote well-being and encourage the grace of the goddess as a living presence in the home, many Indian women begin the day by offering blessed water to the plant, walking around it and praying before it. Tulasi is one of the most revered plants in their culture.

Offerings to all the Hindu deities are deemed complete if they involve the use of Tulasi leaves, Haldi and Sandal paste, and varieties of wild flowers. In the Vrat Kaumudi, one of the sacred books of the Hindus, a ceremony called the tulashi laksha vrat is ordered to be performed when a vow is made. Tulasi leaves are used in offerings to Krishna.

Nayavad is another ceremony among Hindus which involves taking a brass dish containing cooked food, and placing it before the god in a square marked out on the ground. The worshipper squats on a low stool, and taking two leaves of tulasi in his right hand, he closes his eyes with his left, dips the leaves in the water, and throws one upon the food and the other on the god.

Tulasi and Haldi is also used in Hindu weddings and funerals. The marriage season in India is traditionally launched by ceremonies celebrating holy tulasi. One of these is a wedding ceremony called Tulsi Vivah. Here the plant is symbolically married to Saligram carved from a semi-precious stone which represents Vishnu. This takes place in the month of Kartikka of the lunar calendar, around mid-October.



The world scenario

The concept of the sacredness of plants "enters into every form of religion. . . . It rests on the earliest conceptions of the unity of life in nature, in the sense of communion and fellowship with the divine center and source of life." The sacred plant is said to be deeply rooted in the primitive religious ideas of the human race: "In the history of religious development it lies behind the historic era" (Hastings, ed., 1934).

In the primitive totemic religion of the hunter-gatherer, as among the aboriginals of Australia, there existed within a clan's hunting territory sacred locations identified by distinct landmarks like rocks, trees, lakes, rivers and ravines where the clans kept their sacred hoards. The essential feature of totemism is belief in a supernatural connection between a group of people and a group of objects like certain animal species, sometimes plants, or more rarely other objects. Usually there is a taboo on killing or eating an animal totem (Tokarev, 1989).

In totemism we find that plant species may be totems just as animal species or rocks are. On the other hand, the protection of plant species or groves or their planting on grounds of sacredness could be considered a more advanced stage in the evolution of religion. Such groves and sacred trees are associated more with agricultural and pastoral societies.



of public offerings and various rituals. When tribes began uniting, these sites

Thus in the Caucasus Mountains each community had its own sacred grove. Especially worshipped were sanctuaries built among enormous age-old trees, which were never to be cut down. The ancient Slavic people worshipped the spirits of nature, especially of woodlands. The German tribes also had their own sacred forests, which were the venue

became centers for inter-tribal religious worship. For the Germans the sacred groves served the purpose of sanctuaries and temples (Tokarev, 1989).

Hughes (1994), in his study of the environmental problems of the ancient Greeks and Romans, gives us a rare portrait of the sacred groves of the Mediterranean region, glimpses of which are given in the following few paragraphs.

The Greek and Roman landscapes were dotted with hundreds of sacred places. Sacred enclosures formed one of the major categories of land use. These usually contained groves of trees and springs of water; within them the environment was preserved, as a rule, in its natural state. As Seneca (1st century ad) remarked, "If you come upon a grove of old trees that have lifted up their crowns above the common height and shut out the light of the sky by the darkness of their interlacing boughs, you feel that there is a spirit in the place, so lofty is the wood, so lone the spot, so wondrous the thick unbroken shade."

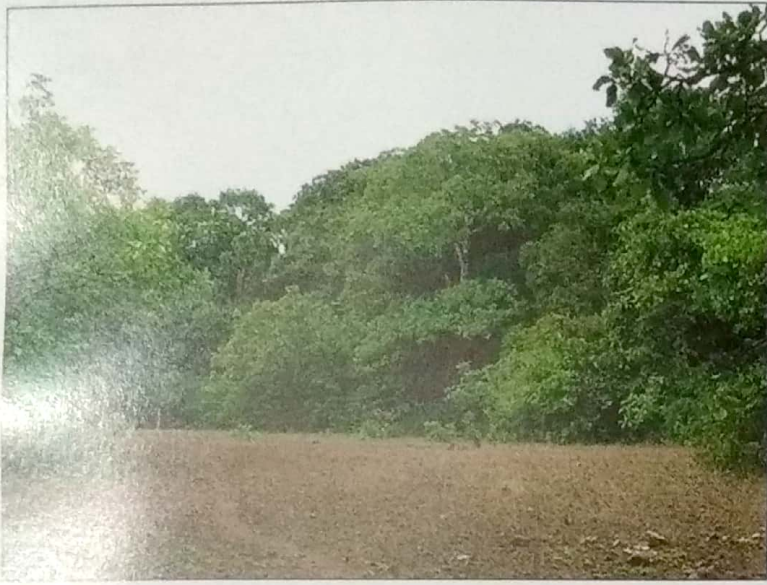
In Virgil (1st century B.C.) is found a reference to the rural folk wondering on seeing an old tree-covered capitoline hill: "Some god has this grove for He also noted that the dwelling!" Gods favour wild trees "unsown by mortal hand".

Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79) indicated that trees were the first temples of the gods, and "even now simple country people dedicate a tree of exceptional height to a god."

Aquellus spoke of travelers praying under the trees on "a little sacred hill fenced all around". But the grove of Daphne was ten miles in circumference. A grove near Lerna stretched all the way down a mountainside to the sea. Alexander the Great found an entire island dedicated to a goddess identified as Artemis (Hughes, 1994).

The Romans often personified the spirit of plant life. The 'forest king' was the human personification of the spirit of the sacred tree, the oak, his living double (Frazer, 1935).

The ancient Greeks represented the spirit of conservation in the shape of a formidable protector of animals and plants, the goddess Artemis. She was the protector not only of wildlife but of the wilderness itself. In ancient religious thought, Artemis endowed the wilderness with sacredness (Hughes, 1990).



Frazer, in *The Golden Bough* (1935), traces the beginnings of sacred groves to the hunting and gathering people of the palaeolithic. Among the Kikuyu of Africa, he says, "Groves of this tree (the migumu) are sacred. In them no axe may be laid to any tree, no branch broken, no firewood gathered, no grass burnt; and wild animals,

which have taken refuge there, may not be molested. In these sacred groves sheep and goats are sacrificed and prayers are offered for rain or fine weather or in behalf of sick children".

The Mbeere tribe of East Africa had many sacred groves, areas ranging from a quarter of a hectare to three hectares, where tree cutting was taboo. Some of these groves survived up to the 1970s, providing excellent sites for examining the vegetation that had existed a century earlier, as several species of trees were rare or not seen at all elsewhere (Little and Brokensha, 1987).

The abundantly productive sycamore (*Ficus sycamorus*) and the date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) were represented in the temple architecture of ancient Egypt. The worship of trees and groves was prevalent in Arabia, Persia, Assyria, the British Isles, Scandinavia, China, India, Ceylon and many other parts of the world (Anonymous, 1971).

The Indonesians have a striking cultural similarity with Indians. The banyan tree, *Ficus benghalensis*, is considered sacred. Springs are often found under mature banyan trees. Indonesians believe that holy spirits reside in the trees and ensure the availability of clean water. For the Javanese, sacred spirits dwell deep within forests. Shadow plays like *Gunungan* have a figure that illustrates the forest ecosystem in which plants, animals, human beings, holy spirits and devils live together (Sastrapradja, 1988).

There could be many reasons why the groves vanished from Europe. A kind of multiple uses was allowed in groves. Although they were strictly protected in Greece and Rome, religious use of their resources was allowed. As much wood might be taken as was necessary for sacrifices. Animals in the grove, such as goats and deer, might be captured and offered to the deity. Trees in the grove could be used in building a temple inside it or even away from it. Wood from the sacred trees was believed to keep its magical powers when fashioned into other objects and was used for making a variety of objects like statues of gods, staffs, sceptres, etc. Wood was even supplied to private persons at a fixed price for sacrifices (Hughes, 1984).

It seems the groves also suffered from the pressures of urbanization, as baths, stadia, gymnasiums, schools, etc., were established in them. At times they also had to cater to the timber needs of the military. What caused the final downfall of the groves in Europe? In the words of Hughes (1984): The groves lasted as places of economic and religious importance down through the Christianization of the Roman Empire. As centres of pagan worship, they became the objects of Christian zeal, again both religious and economic. The emperor Theodosius II (5th century AD) issued an edict directing that the groves be cut down unless they had already been appropriated for some purpose compatible with Christianity. A few of them became monastery gardens and churchyards, and here and there in the Mediterranean even today one will find a gigantic old tree that is supposed, however unlikely it might seem, to have sheltered Plato or Hippocrates, and has been spared for that reason.



Sacred Groves and Sacred Trees: The Indian Scenario

The faith of individuals and isolated populations has always been nurtured in India from time immemorial. Their belief is unquestioned and reverence to nature has been

the hallmark of all subjects / clans of Hindu culture unlike Christianity and Islam who preach one god principle. Thus many of the ancient practices have been sidelined or lost in the process. The ritualistic pattern of life has originated from these ancient practices and often testified by the Brahmanic cult into codified system of religion. Thus the enlightened Brahman class of



Hinduism has not been opposed to several of the local cults involving the worship of sacred groves and sacred plants; there has been an almost imperceptible transformation of the grove into the temple. Hinduism itself has grown out of the amalgamation of scores of local cults, which are often nature-based. Therefore the worship of plants, groves, animals and natural objects like rivers, mounts, ant-hills and rocks continues to have some place in it. Outdoor sanctuaries were the first temples of the gods. A sacred place demarcated for a deity was called *temenos* in Greek and *templum* in Latin. (Subash Chandran and Gadgil, 1998).

Brosse (1989) observed:

The sacred grove was at the origin of the temple, whose columns were initially trees, and later of the Christian church which still evokes it by the alignment of its pillars, the semidarkness within it, and the soft coloured light that filters through its stained glass windows.

India has rich folk traditions of the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources, to which at least its 'ecosystem people' still adhere to varying degrees (Gadgil and Vartak, 1976; Gadgil, 1991). The protection of whole communities as sacred ponds and groves is a remarkable feature of the Indian subcontinent. One of the most widespread of the traditions in India is the protection given to trees of the genus *Ficus*, which dot the countryside and are often the only large trees in the midst of towns and cities. They are now recognized by biologists as keystone resources of tropical forests,

'fruiting' often at times when most other species are without fruits (Terborgh, 1986).

Ashton (1988), a tropical forest ecologist, on the traditional Indian perceptions of the sacred in nature states:

"The Indian sub-continent is without doubt the world centre of human cultural diversity. . . . The Hindus have inherited perceptions of a people who have lived since ancient times in a humid climate particularly favorable for forest life. Settled people, they see themselves as one with the natural world, as both custodians and dependants. The people of India continue to harvest an astonishing diversity of products from the forest. Forests of the mountains and watersheds have traditionally been sacred; springs and the natural landscape in their vicinity have attracted special veneration. The Hindus learned from their predecessor's millennia ago, a mythology, sociology and technology of irrigation that has enabled the most intensive yet sustainable agriculture humanity has so far devised".

It is mainly in the hilly and mountainous areas of India like the Himalayas, the Western Ghats and central India that ancient practices survive, sometimes in their pristine form. Studies on sacred groves reveal that they are priceless treasures of great ecological, biological, cultural and historical value. In the evolution of religion sacred groves once played a vital role, but perished often without leaving a trace as in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East. The situation in India used to be quite different, at least until the early British period. This is quite evident from the observations of D. Brandis, the first Inspector General of Forests in India:

"Very little have been published regarding sacred groves in India, but they are, or rather were, very numerous. I have found them in nearly all provinces. As instances I may mention the Garo and Khasia hills which I visited in 1879, the Devara Kadus or sacred groves of Coorg . . . and the hill ranges of the Salem district in the Madras Presidency. . . .well known are the Swami

Shola on the Yelagiris, the sacred grove at Pudur on the Javadis and several sacred forests on the Shevaroyes. These are situated in the moister parts of the country. In the dry region sacred groves are particularly numerous in Rajputana. In Mewar they usually consist of *Anogeissus pendula*, a moderate sized tree with small leaves, which fall early in the dry season. . . . Before falling the foliage of these trees turns a beautiful yellowish red, and at that season these woods resemble our Beech forests in autumn. In the southernmost States of Rajputana, in Partabgarh and Banswara, in a somewhat moister climate, the sacred groves, here called Malwan, consist of a variety of trees, Teak among the number. These sacred forests, as a rule, are never touched by the axe, except when wood is wanted for the repair of religious buildings, or in special cases for other purposes (Brandis, 1897)".



Brandis also referred to a "remarkable little forest of Sal (*Shorea robusta*)" near Gorakhpur being maintained by a Muslim saint, Mian Sahib. The forest was in good condition and well protected. Nothing was allowed to be cut except wood to feed the sacred fire and "this required the cutting annually of a small number of trees which were carefully selected among those that showed signs of age

and decay".

In Western ghats, Karnataka we find many families have their own sacred grooves with specific plants in them protected. It is also a taboo to enter into the grooves other than the prescribed occasion. The use of plants in the groove is also for a specific purpose and not routine.

In the sacred forests or *devarakadus* of Coorg also, firewood and construction materials were removed only for the temple's sake (Shri Satyan, 1971). The *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XI (1908), noted that in Coorg *devarakadus* were set apart for Ayyappadeva. These were "untrodden by human foot and reserved for the abodes or hunting grounds of deified ancestors".

Rao (1969-70) observed that the sites of the *gramadevatas* (village goddesses) in Andhra "are almost always in the vicinity of trees".

All over Chota Nagpur, Risley (1908) remarked,

There are many jungle-clad hills, . . . the favorite haunts of bears, which beaters of the Animistic races steadfastly refuse to approach until the mysterious power which pervades them has been conciliated by the sacrifice of a fowl. Everywhere we find sacred groves, the abode of equally indeterminate beings, who are represented by no symbols and of whose form and functions no one can give an intelligible account, which have not yet been clothed with individual attributes; they linger on as survivals of the impersonal stage of early religion.

Kavus, the sacred groves of Kerala, are "sacred places where trees and plants were allowed to grow undisturbed and where reptiles, birds and animals could have free living without fear of poaching or interference by man". These *kavus* are of two kinds. Some are in the midst of human habitation and in most cases attached to households or not far away from them. These *kavus* used to have the serpent (*sarpakavu*) or Durga (*durgakavu*) as deities; but of late these distinctions got blurred due to both being worshipped in the same *kavu*. The *ayyappankavus*, on the other hand, exist in the mountain ranges engulfed in forests (Nayar, 1987).

A serpent *kavu*, an abode of snakes, was an indispensable adjunct to well-to-do Nair and Namboodiri houses in Kerala. An early 19th century estimate states the number of *kavus* in the erstwhile province of Travancore in south Kerala as 15,000 (Pillai, 1940).

Sacred trees like *Ficus* and *Mimusops elengi*, remnants of sacred groves, or intact groves with rare plants and sacred ponds, are associated with the Bhagavati or Mother Goddess temples of Kerala. Behind the facade of *vela* and *pooram*, the

colourful cultural festivals of the beautiful temple complexes of Kerala, with their caparisoned elephants, men masked as demons or deities, sword-wielding oracles dressed in red and dipping blood, the exhilarating *panchavadya* — the music from five instruments, with the drum in the lead — are the rapidly fading folklore about tangled groves and their mysterious deities.

Ramakrishnan (1992) observes that the climax vegetation at higher elevations in Meghalaya, as at Cherrapunji, is today represented only by sacred groves. According to A.S. Chauhan of the Botanical Survey of India, the sacred groves of Meghalaya, totalling about 1000 km² of undisturbed natural vegetation, are found scattered in small pockets all over the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. With heavy pressure of population on the land, these groves remain the last refugia for 700 rare plant species (*Down to Earth*, 1994).

Early travelers like Hunter in 1879 and Gurdon in 1914 made frequent mention of the very conspicuous groves of evergreen forests on the Khasi plateau in Meghalaya (Rodgers, unpublished). Bor (1942) stated that all evergreen forest patches on the Khasi plateau were either sacred groves or land unfit for cultivation.

Not only did sacred groves exist in more favourable climatic conditions, but their presence is noticed even in the deserts of Rajasthan. For instance the Bishnois, a sect of Hindus, are known for assiduously protecting *khejadi* (*Prosopis cineraria*) trees and groves (Sankhala and Jackson, 1985).



Sacred Groves and Trees: Scriptural and Historical References

The *Pipal* tree or *asvatta* (*Ficus religiosa*) has had a conspicuous position in the cultural landscape of north India and human collective memory for more than 5,000 years. It was depicted even on Mohenjo Daro seals. Buddha himself found enlightenment under a *pipal* tree

(Mansberger, 1988). Buddha is reported to have been born in a sacred grove, Lumbinivana, full of *sal* trees (Gadgil, 1985).

The conservation of forest patches, groves and trees probably dates back to the pre-epic period in Indian history. Karve (1974) and Gadgil and Guha (1992) state that the introduction of iron in India about 1000 BC, was instrumental in the march of agriculture and pastoralism into the forest-clad Gangetic Valley. The combined use of iron and fire made it possible to bring the middle Gangetic plains under intensive agricultural-pastoral colonization with wet paddy cultivation as a key element. The destruction of forests with their wild animals amounted to weakening the resource base of the food gatherers. The burning of the *khandavavana* on the banks of Yamuna by Krishna and Arjuna, though couched in terms of a great ritual sacrifice to please the fire god Agni, was evidently to provide land for Arjuna's agricultural-pastoral clan.

Vana, though meaning forest, could have been sacred forest. Ravana kept Sita captive in the ashoka vana, or forest of *Saraca indica*. This beautiful small tree is a sacred tree of India and grows in the shade of humid tropical evergreen forests. The authors have seen the *ashoka* tree growing in many *vanas* (*bana* in Kannada)



which are sacred to the people of Uttara Kannada. Early Buddhist literature reflects the agrarian landscape of the pre-Buddhist period. Around the *gama* (village) or suburban area lay the pasture, its woodland where the people gathered their regular biomass requirements, and its primeval uncleared forests like *andhavana* of Kosala, *sitavana* of Magadha, etc., which were retreats haunted by wild beasts and woodland spirits (Rapson, 1935) just as most sacred groves are the abodes of spiritual deities even today.

The Hindu scriptures, though they do not have much to say about sacred forests, do highlight the importance of planting trees and groves of trees. For instance the *Vriksotsavavidhi* of the *Matsyapurana* attaches great importance to the

planting of trees and even to the celebration of the tree festival. The same *purana* states: "A son is equal to a deep reservoir of water and a tree planted is equal to ten sons". Other *dharmastras* also prescribe the planting of trees: "Just as a good son saves his family, so a tree laden with flowers and fruits saves its owner from falling into



hell, and one who plants five mango trees does not go to hell" (Kane, ed., 1958).

For Hindus the *bel* tree, *Aegle marmelos*, is associated with Shiva, *tulasi* with Vishnu, and fig (*Ficus glomerata*) with Dattatreya, the son of Trimurty. Pillai, (1986) refers to the *sthalavrikshas* associated with temples, the mango tree of Kanchipuram, the *jambu* tree of Jambukehavaram near Srirangam, and the *tillai* forest of Chidambaram.

In the association of gods with particular plant species we have a parallelism with the ancient Greeks. Oaks were said to belong to Zeus, willows to Hera, olives to Athena, laurel to Apollo, pines to Pan, poplars to Hercules, and so on. However, inside the grove the deity was not identified with any special plant species (Hughes, 1984). This is also true for India.

Nakeera, the Tamil poet of the Sangam period, states that Lord Muruga could be found in the forest, in a place surrounded by water, rivers, tanks, meeting places under trees, new-grown groves, etc. The *kadampa* tree is likened to Lord Muruga himself. Sangam tradition holds that he is the owner of all the hilly tracts with rich groves (Ramachandran, 1990). Ayyappa, Aiyannar and Sasta (all considered to be the same) of south India is essentially a deity of the woods, whose province is to guard the fields, crops and herds of the peasantry and to drive away their enemies (Alexander, 1949; Pillai, 1939).

No temples existed in India during the Vedic period. They were not to be found in the pre-Buddhist period except for wooden ones. The ancient Buddhist sacred place was the *stupa* (Hastings, ed., 1934). The various gods and goddesses whom the indigenous population of peninsular India worshipped were not accustomed to dwell in the secluded atmosphere of temples; they loved the open air. Even today, for the *gramadevata* (village goddess) of south India there are no temples in many villages. The deity may be in the shadow of a big tree. Generally they are lodged in small shrines. In a good number of villages no object is placed to represent the deity and the tree itself is regarded as the embodiment of the deity (Ramanayya, 1983).

The Italian traveler Della Valle, who visited India in 1623–25, observed an interesting stage in the transformation of the sacred tree into the anthropomorphic form. He found in Surat the worship of Parvati in the form of a tree. Her face was painted on the tree and offerings were of vegetable origin (Wheller and Macmillan, 1956).

Scenario in Karnataka

Karnataka has the distinction of practice of worship of plants and maintenance of sacred grooves for several centuries. The people living in the forests of Western Ghats have great reverence to their surroundings and identified many valuable benefits of nature in the form of plants and animals. Every household has their own sacred place of worship and often maintains specific plants in them. They range from a single plant /tree to grove of few plants to a large extent of forest. The sacred forests range from few hectares to several hundred, thus giving unique status to their surrounding environs. The plants in this area remain untouched except on special occasions and for specific purpose of offering to god or medicine.

Kodagu is well known for such sacred forests termed as *devarakadus*. Firewood and construction materials are removed only for the temple's sake (Shri Satyan, 1971). There are as many as several hundreds of *devarakadu* in the small district devoted to god.

The other forms of sacred places like *naga bana*, *boothana kadu*, *marammana kadu* are frequent across the state. The eastern plains have large tree associated with few bushes and climbers left untouched and offered *pooja* annually.

In Uttara Kannada, temple construction in all probability began with the Brahmanic influence. However, temples and priesthood could not be supported to a large extent by the subsistence peasants, pastoralists and hunter-gatherers. Therefore sacred groves, sacred trees and various objects of nature continued to be places of worship. Nevertheless, with improvement in the economic conditions of the people and changes in value systems, groves and sacred trees might have given way to shrines and temples. The shrine to the *betedevaru* (hunter's god) of the Maakkivokkal peasant is evidently in the ruins of a grove. A large termite mound under a tiled roof is the original deity. A crude human image of a hunter was installed there later. In the Karikan temple devoted to Karikanamma (Mother of the Black Forest), the natural rock on a hill summit representing the deity is covered with a metal mask depicting the Mother, considered to be Parvati. The temple, under Havik Brahmana priesthood, co-exists with a wonderful grove dominated by *Dipterocarpus indicus*, a rare tree in Uttara Kannada. This grove is

today part of a reserve forest. The Shantika Parameshwari temple in Kumta, an important one for non-Brahmanas, also has a large termite mound as the deity. Here also a metal mask depicting the Mother conceals most of the mound (Subash Chandran and Gadgil, 1998).

In Dakshina Kannada Bhuthana kadu, naga bana are most common.

Most of our sacred grooves in the Western Ghats comprise of very valuable as key stone species, economically important species and more so the potent medicinal plant species

These sacred groves act as important refugia on an otherwise impoverished landscape. The predominant species often encountered are *Artocarpus hirsuta*, *Calophyllum wightianum*, *Caryota urens*, *Chrysophyllum roxburghii*, *Cinnamomum* spp., *Dimocarpus longan*, *Diospyros microphylla*, *Diospyros oocarpa*, *Dysoxylum*



binectariferum, *Ficus nervosa*, *Garcinia* spp., *Holigarna grahami*, *Hopea canarana*, *Hydnocarpus laurifolius*, *Knema attenuata*, *Litsea* spp., *Lophopetalum wightianum*, *Mesua ferrea*, *Mimusops elengi*, *Strombosia zeylanica* *Syzygium canarensis*, *Syzygium hemispherica* and *Vateria indica*.

Many other species of value like *Actinodaphne malabarica*, *Litsea ghatica*, *Schefflera venulosa*, *Nothopegia colebrookeana*, *Celtis cinnamomea*, *Dracaena ternifolia*, *Palaquim ellipticum*, *Memecylon terminale*, *Entada pursaetha*, *Flacourtia Montana*, *Gnetum scandens*, *Strychnos nuxvomica* are also seen across the region

While in the plains, the species like, *Ficus religiosa*, *Ficus benghalensis*, *Terminalia bellerica*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Acacia ferruginea*, *Aegle marmelos*, *Capparis sepiaria*, *Streblus asper* are commonly seen.

The diversity of the species in the area is a testimony of the sanctity and protection provided by the traditional practice and worshipful attitude of the people. These sacred groves are undergoing rapid changes like shrinkage in area, isolation effects being disconnected islands of vegetation, windfalls and encroachment of more heliophilous drought-resistant plants (Subash Chandran Gadgil, 1998).

In Indian Mythology god Shiva and goddess Parvathi have great reverence and most of the sacred plants and grooves are associated with them in different forms of names. In Karnataka and Southern India in general vast majority of disciples offer prayers to them and associated deities

There is still plasticity enough in the Hindu religion, as it does not preach any dogmatic creed. It has evolved through the ages, incorporating a mega diversity of cultures, religious cults and creeds. As Vannucci (1992) puts it: "In traditional thought in India there is no distinction between sacred and the profane: everything is sacred. Tolerance of all beliefs, and the implicit recognition that everything evolves — that nothing is static and immutable except the Ultimate Reality or Brahman. The essence of this tradition is to live in partnership rather than the exploitation of nature."

In the personification of Lord Shiva, for instance, we may observe the evolution of Indian traditional thought of living in partnership with nature. He is

as old as Indian thought and his origin probably merges with oblivion in the Indus Valley culture. He has mountains and wild places as his abode. His entangled hair symbolizes the primeval untamed forest. The Ganga originating from his matted hair depicts the watershed function of sacred groves. Serpents coiled around his neck symbolize coexistence with the denizens of the ecosystem. By his trident and leopard skin attire he brings to our mind the picture of the hunter-gatherer. The sacred ash smeared on his body could be the ash of the woods, which restores fertility to depleted soils. As the fragile tropical hill soils got quickly depleted of nutrients, it was wood ash that



sustained agriculture; it also neutralized soil acidity in areas of heavy rainfall. Shifting cultivation, which was widely prevalent in the hill country, involved growing and burning of wood. Shiva and his prototypes were known for their wrath. Probably this refers to their power over fire, which could reduce woods to ashes. This destruction is followed by creation; incorporating the elements (*bhutas*) from Mother Earth sprouts crops and grasses and once again forests. The sacred grove, on the other hand, was aboriginal forest, which enhanced overall landscape heterogeneity and thereby greater plant and animal diversity. The necklace of *rudraksha* (*Elaeocarpus* spp.) adorning Shiva's neck also highlights his links with the forest. (Subash Chandran Madhav Gadgil, 1998).

The entire clan of Shiva is replete with ecological symbolism. Shiva's consort Parvati is considered the daughter of the mountain. She is the personification of Mother Earth. Apparently the female deities of the sacred groves may be identified as Parvati, her incarnations or prototypes.

Ganesha, the son of Shiva, is a combination of elephant and man. The elephant is worshipped in this country and even today forms an integral part of

many temples and festivals. Muruga or Subramanyan, another son of Shiva, also with the trident as his favourite weapon, and the peacock as his vehicle, is a deity of woods and mountains in South India. The *bhutas*, despite their grotesque caricatures gifted from the hands of textual tradition, in all probability would be objects of worship for peasants. Scores of *bhutas* are still worshipped as the guardians of fields and cattle. *Bhutas*, unseen, simply would mean elements, of which water, the earth, fire and air, and the life-giving light coming from the sky are integral components of the ecosystem (Subhash Chandran, 1992). No wonder Shiva is considered the supreme lord of *bhutas* and Ganesha their marshal.

The Indian tradition is strongly Cosmo centric, where man lives as part of a system in which everything is related to everything else. Creation and destruction take place simultaneously. Materials and energy move from organism to organism. Matter is arranged in precise order in every organism, but in death this order is followed by disorder: cycling of materials through organisms brings order once again. But today, rapidly drifting from our traditions of sustainable use and coexistence, we seem to be entering a man-centred world that implies the decimation of nature. In religion, superstitions with wide-ranging implications for ecology are replacing superstitions of a simpler kind. Our gods, alienated from the elements of nature, are getting locked up in temple complexes that have turned out to be places of elaborate ritualism. This drift is going to revise Indians' attitudes towards nature. The view that has gained strength is of the over harvesting of natural resources, not their prudent use. As a result the sacred groves are disappearing and being replaced by housing sites, agriculture, secondary forests or even eucalyptus plantations. Temples also are replacing the groves. Thus we find that in most of Kerala, Bhagavati temples have come up in places where, presumably, groves existed in the past. *Bhutaasthanas* or shrines for *bhutas* appear to be a major reason for the degradation of the sacred groves of Dakshina Kannada. Today at Talacauvery in Coorg, the sacred Cauvery River is not gushing out from a watershed forest as it used to but from a concrete pit in the premises of a temple complex at the base of a deforested mountain! The all-powerful bureaucracy, in collusion with the industrial lobby and politicians, together forming a formidable stranglehold, too realised that the groves, once an integral part of the village landscape and ecosystem, are no more sacred.

Present Study

"The present book attempts to provide information on selected 'Sacred Plants' focusing on their abodes, distribution, description and Medicinal Uses apart from their role in various Indian tradition and culture of worship' and to provide a comprehensive account on some of the important plants, which are used in rituals dealing with cultural heritage, festivals, and religious ceremonies standing from birth till death but also in medicine, particularly in India.

The sacred plants and maintenance of plants in specific pattern is also important. Several references are available for them in ancient Hindu writings (Anonymous 1995) on the forms of gardens depicting specific species combinations. These have reference to specific gods and goddesses and their preferences to the plant species. The plants described in the text refer to various pooja practices and association with planting in specific gardens is given in the annexure.

Following are the major worships considered.

Anathapadmanabha vratha	-	pathra pooja
Anathapadmanabha vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Nrusimha jayanthi vratha	-	pathra pooja
Nrusimha jayanthi vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Rushipanchami vratha	-	pathra pooja
Rushipanchami vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Sankasta chaturthi vratha	-	pathra pooja
Sankasta chaturthi vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Sathyanarayana vratha	-	pathra pooja
Sathyanarayana vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Somavara vratha	-	pathra pooja
Somavara vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Swarnagouri vratha	-	pathra pooja

Swarnagouri vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Varamahalakshmi vratha	-	pathra pooja
Varamahalakshmi vratha	-	pushpa pooja
Vinayaka chaturthi vratha	-	patra pooja

The gardens, which depict the selected association of plants, are listed in the annexure.

Ashoka vana

Nakshathra vana

Nandana vana

Raashi vana

Saptharshi vana

Shivapanchayathana vana

The description of the plants provide information on selected common names, its relation to Botanical name, Sanskrit name description, season of flowering and fruiting, the association with specific poojas and offerings along with the medicinal properties.



PLANT DESCRIPTION

ADHAKI

Botanical Name: *Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millspaugh,

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Thogari bele

Hindi: Turdhal

English: Pigeon pea

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Erect shrubs with branches striate, pubescent. Leaf rachis 1-3cm long; leaflets elliptic-oblong chartaceous, grey crescent beneath, to 9x3cm. Raceme 6-10 cm long. Calyx 0.8 cm long. Corolla yellow, 1.8cm, long. Pod pubescent and glandular, tipped with base of style.

Flowering and fruiting: October and February

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Leaf in the treatment of jaundice, to relieve inflammations of mouth and tongue; seeds to check milk secretion, snake bite

Religious Importance: Used in Navagraha homa as Navagraha danya

AGASTHYA

Botanical Name: *Sesbania grandiflora* Pers.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Agase

Hindi: Agast

English: Tree bean

Distribution: Commonly cultivated in the garden.

Description: Loosely branching tree up to 15 m tall. Leaves are pinnately compound up to 30 cm long with 20-50 leaflets in pairs, dimensions 12-44 x 5-15 mm, oblong to elliptical in shape. Flowers are large, white, yellowish, rose pink or red with a calyx 15-22 mm long. The standard has dimensions up to 10.5 x 6 cm. Pods are long (20-60 cm) and thin (6-9 mm) with broad sutures containing 15-50 seeds. Flowering and fruiting: all season.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- expectorant; bark- tonic, febrifuge; leaf- tonic, aperient, diuretic; seed- emmenagogue; flower. Bark for dysentery, ulcers of tongue; leaf for mumps; flower for eye complaints

Religious Importance: Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Saptharshi vana.

AKSHATHA

Botanical Name: *Oryza sativa* L.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Bhattha

Hindi: Chaval

English: Paddy, Rice

Distribution: Cultivated in all parts of the state.

Description: Annual herb, cultivated. Leaves alternate, cauline, sessile, light green, exstipulate, sheathing, linear, acuminate, apex acute, multicostate parallel venation, hairy on the margins, ligulate, ligules well developed. Inflorescence a panicle of spikelets, main rachis terminates into a spikelet, rachis of inflorescence has 5 or 6 nodes, from each node a main lateral branched. Each lateral branch ends in a terminal spikelet. Stamens 3, filaments long and free. Ovary 1-celled, superior, single ovule, basal placentation, 2 short styles, 2 laterally feathery stigmas.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- demulcent, refrigerant. Fruit to relieve inflamed intestines and febrile diseases, to relieve poor digestion, diarrhoea, dysentery and upset bowels

Religious Importance: Worshipped in all most all traditional poojas

AKSHODA

Botanical Name: *Juglans regia* L.

Family: Juglandaceae

Kannada: Akhrotu

Hindi: Akhrot

English: Walnut

Distribution: Bisle ghat.

Description: A deciduous tree to 30 m high, with silvery gray. Large odd pinnate leaves. Flowers in drooping catkins, edible fruit a furrowed nut within a thick-woody, globular husk.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark- anthelmintic, detergent; leaf- tonic, astringent; fruit- alterative. Fruit for rheumatism

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

AMALAKA

Botanical Name: *Phyllanthus emblica* L.

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Kannada: Bettada nellli kaayi

Hindi: Amlika

English: Emblic myrobalan

Distribution: Commonly found in roadsides as weed in ghats.

Description: Trees to 6- 8m; branchlets reddish- brown hairy. Disc glands minute, sometimes 0. Leaf blade to 1x0.2cm, oblong- elliptic, mucronate at tip. Perianth lobes 6, biseriate, scarious- margined. Disc of minute glands, alternating with inner tepals in male, sometimes obscure and 0; in female cupular, lacreate. Stamens 6, filaments columnar. Ovary fleshy, ovules 2 per locule; style 3, fused below, once twice branched, spreading or recurved. Fruit a 6- seeded, globose berry.

Flowering and fruiting: December & August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- acrid, cooling, diuretic, laxative, antipyretic, alexeteric; flowers- cooling, aperient; root and bark- astringent; young stem; seed; fruit. Leaves to treat opthalmia; root and bark to treat gonorrhoea; young stem for earache; fruits for leprosy, constipation; seeds for asthma; dry fruits for jaundice

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja

AMBASTA

Botanical Name: *Spondias pinnata* (L.f.) Kurz

Family: Anacardiaceae

Kannada: Kaadu amate

Hindi: Jungli-am

English: Hog plum

Distribution: Found evergreen and semi-evergreen forests of Western ghats.

Description: Moderate sized tree, upto 3m high. Leaves alternate, leaflets 5-6paired, 7x4cm. Inflorescence a terminal panicle. Sepals 5, connate at base, petals 5, Stamens 8 rarely 10, filaments short, annular disc present. Ovary 5-celled. Sunken in the disc, ovule solitary, styles short, stigma simple. Fruit a fleshy drupe.

Flowering and fruiting: March & April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root; bark- refrigerant; fruit- astringent, antiscorbutic. Root for regulating menstruation; bark on rheumatism; fruit for bilious dyspepsia

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

AMLA

Botanical Name: *Tamarindus indica* L.

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Hunase mara

Hindi: Amlica

English: Tamarind tree

Distribution: Found in all plains, cultivated, probably indigenous to Central Africa.

Description: Large deciduous tree. Leaf rachis 10-15cm long; leaflets 14-16 pairs oblong, obtuse, oblique at base, glabrous, 2x0.6cm long, bracts enclosing the buds, caducous. Corolla striped with pink. Flowers in racemes calyx 5, corolla 5, Stamens 10. Pod pale brown, slightly curved. Seeds smooth, brown shining.

Flowering and fruiting: April & September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- anthelmintic; fruit and seed- laxative, carminative. Bark for stomach pain; leaf for muscular pain, indigestion; fruit and seed for cold, cough, refreshing drink, protects from sunstroke

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pathra pooja

AMLAANA

Botanical name: *Crossandra infundibuliformis* (L.) Ness.

Kannada: Abbalige, Kanakambara

Hindi: Priya darsa

English: Crossandra

Distribution: Often grown in gardens and near temples.

Description: An undershrub. Branches terete, glabrous or nearly so. Leaves 4 whorled, rather thick, lanceolate, acute, glabrous, shining, base much attenuated into the petiole. Petiole often owing to decurrent leaf blade. Flowers numerous, in axillary often long pedunculate quadrangular narrow spikes, Calyx 5 partite to the base. Corolla orange yellow, pubescent outside; tube slender. Capsules oblong, subacute, glabrous; seeds compressed densely clothed with fringed scales.

Flowering and fruiting: October-March and March-May

Medicinal properties and uses: Whole plant- aphrodisiac.

Religious Importance: Flowers used in all traditional poojas.

ANJEERA

Botanical Name: *Ficus carica* L.

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Anjoora

Hindi: Anjoor

English: Fig tree

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Small trees. Leaves alternate, rarely opposite, stipules large, sheathing terminal bud, deciduous, leaving annular scars, blade simple. Inflorescence a hypanthodium, paired, solitary or clustered, receptacle (fig) urceolate, sessile or stalked, subtended by 3 basal bracts, provided with apical orifice, closed by imbricate bracts. Flowers inside the fig unisexual, numerous, minute. Ovary sessile or stalked, unilocular with 1 ovule, style lateral, stigma various.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- emollient, aperient, demulcent, acrid. Fruit employed to eliminate warts

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

ANKOLA

Botanical Name: *Alangium salvifolium* (L.f.) Wangerin

Family: Alangiaceae

Kannada: Ankole

Hindi: Ankera

English: Sage leaved alangium

Distribution: Growing in dry and evergreen forests

Description: Small deciduous trees. Leaves narrowly elliptic or ovate, acute or obtuse with a pair of basal and 4- 6 pairs of lateral veins; domatia absent. Flowers greenish - white, pubescent outside. Stamens more than twice the number of petals. Fruit ellipsoid, crowned with vestiges of calyx.

Flowering and fruiting: April & May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark for enlarged spleen, dropsy, colic pain, cholera, phthisis; root for fever; leaf for rheumatic pain, skin diseases; fruit for eye diseases.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, it signifies fertility

APAAMARGA

Botanical Name: *Achyranthes aspera* L.

Family: Amaranthaceae

Kannada: Uttharaani

Hindi: Puthkunda

English: Chaff-flower

Distribution: Commonly seen in all districts of roadsides and waste places.

Description: A stiff herb. Stem obscurely 4-angled, sulcate. Leaves ovate, elliptic-lanceolate or orbiculate-obovate, hairy or glabrous, obtuse, acute or acuminate. Mature spikes 40 cm long. Flowers green or pink, bisexual, deflexed

after anthesis. Stamens 5, rarely 2, alternating with pseudo-staminodes, style short, stigma capitate.

Flowering and fruiting: September & April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- diuretic, abortifacient; leaf- antidote; seed- emetic. Root for caries of teeth, atropy, emaciation, cachexy, rheumatism. stangulation of intestines, scabies, bite of tiger and snake, malarial fever; whole plant for cough; leaf for leucoderma.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Navagraha vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

ARAVATA

Botanical Name: *Citrus reticulata* Blanco

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Kodagina kithale

Hindi: Santara

English: Common orange

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Shrub cultivated. Shrub cultivated. Leaves alternate, 1-foliate, coriaceous, petiole often winged, leaflets entire or crenulate. Flowers axillary, solitary fascicled or in small cymes. Calyx cupular or urceolate, 3-5 lobed. Petals 4-8, linear-oblong, thick, imbricate. Disk large, cupular or annular. Stamens numerous, inserted round the disk. Ovary many-celled, style stout, deciduous, stigma capitate, ovules 4-8 in each cell, 2-seriate. Fruit a large berry, oblong or globose, fleshy, many celled.

Flowering and fruiting: July and November

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Flower- stimulant; fruit- laxative, tonic, astringent, aphrodisiac.

Religious Importance: Used for Tulasi pooja during Utthan dwadashi





Spondia pinnata



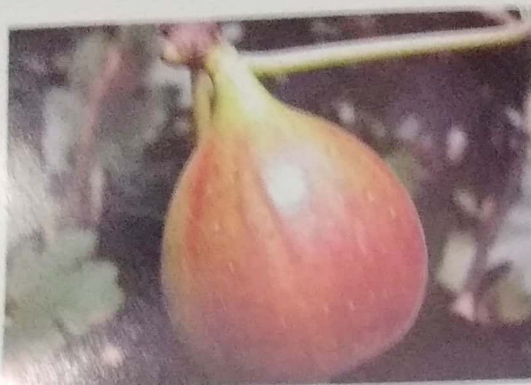
Tamarindus indica



Crosandra infundibuliformis



Sacred Plants



Ficus carica



Citrus reticulata



Terminalia arjuna



Calotropis gigantea



Saraca asoca



Thevetia nerifolia



Linum usitatissimum



Ficus religiosa



ARJUNA

Botanical Name: *Terminalia arjuna* Wight & Arn

Family: Combretaceae

Kannada: Bilimatthi, thore matthi

Hindi: Arjun

English: Arjun myrobalan

Distribution: Commonly found along banks of river, streams in secondary deciduous forests.

Description: A large handsome deciduous tree. Leaves alternate or subopposite, entire or slightly crenulate, often with glands on the petiole or on the lower part of the midrib beneath, stipules 0. Flowers small, green or white, in spikes, the spikes solitary or in panicles, hermaphrodite or sometimes the upper flowers of the spike male. Fruit with 5 angles, short hard or wings, usually notched near the top, the lines on the wings oblique and curving upwards.

Flowering and fruiting: May & February

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark astringent, cardiotonic, diuretic, leprosy; fruit tonic, decoobstruent; leaf for headache.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Nakshathra vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

ARKA

Botanical Name: *Calotropis gigantea* (L.) R.Br.

Family: Asclepiadaceae

Kannada: Ekkada gida

Hindi: Lalmandar

English: Gigantic Swallowwort

Distribution: Common in all districts, especially in drier parts of the state, often on black cotton soil.

Description: Shrubs. Leaves elliptic - ovate to obovate, densely arachnoid pubescent when young, later glabrous, 1- 2 cm long; base clasping cordate; apex obtuse or slightly acuminate. Cymes subumbellate, lateral. Corolla lobes 5-2 mm long, purple to white, keel shaped lobes adnate to the gynostegium, each with a recurved vesicle at the base and a pair of auricles at the apex. Gynostegium elongate but not strictly stipitate. Pollinia pendent from dry horny corpuscula, 2 per anther, waxy, without pellucid margin.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root, bark, latex- purgative, leaf, flower, seed- abortifacient. Root for leprosy; bark for dysentery, skin complaints, convulsions, rheumatism; latex for tooth ache, pain in chest, spleen, boils; leaf as tincture for intermittent fever; flower for cold and cough

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

ASHOKA

Botanical Name: *Saraca asoca* (Roxb.) Willd.

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Ashokada mara

Hindi: Asoka

English: Asoka

Distribution: Found in Western ghats and often cultivated in the gardens.

Description: Evergreen trees. Leaves even pinnate rachis 25cm long; leaflets 4-6 pairs, oblong, acute to acuminate to apex, 25x7cm. Panicle 5cm, long, 10cm broad. Flowers orange yellow, pink with age, bracteoles erect, embracing the calyx tube, larger than bract. Calyx lobes half the length of the tube. Stamens 6-8. Pod 5-15x2.5cm, flat shortly apiculate.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark astringent, sedative; seed for blood dysentery, leucorrhoea; flower for diabetes, biliousness; seed for urinary discharges.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanaarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana.

ASHVAHA OR KARAVEERA

Botanical name: *Thevetia peruviana* (Pers.) Merr.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Kadukasi, kanogalu

Hindi: Kaner

English: Exile oleander

Distribution: A native of tropical America; frequently cultivated in gardens.

Description: A small tree. Leaves 10-15X0.6-1 cm, linear-lanceolate, tapering at both ends, nearly sessile, margins revolute. Flowers yellow, sometimes creamy-white, in terminal few-flowered cymes. Calyx-lobes triangular-lanceolate, acute. Corolla tube 4-5 cm long, cylindrical in the lower third, funnel-shaped above. Drupes broadly turbinate, slightly compressed, 2.5 cm or more across. Seeds strongly flattened.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal properties and uses: Tincture of bark is cathartic and emetic; also used as febrifuge. Leaves purgative and emetic. Roots are made into a plaster, applied to tumours. Seeds used as an abortifacient and purgative in rheumatism and dropsy; also used as an alexeteric. They are employed for criminal poisoning of cattle. All parts of plant including latex are poisonous and contain glycosides which are the active principles; of these peruvoside is the most important.

Religious Importance: Flowers used in all traditional poojas and shrub growing near temples

ASHWATTHA

Botanical Name: *Ficus religiosa* L.

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Aralimara

Hindi: Pipal

English: Peepul tree

Distribution: Widely cultivated near temples and rarely seen in the dry deciduous forests.

Description: Large tree with or without aerial roots. Leaf blade slightly repand along the margin, broadly ovate or suborbicular, caudate, truncate - acute at base, glabrous, chartaceous, with 5-7 basal nerves and 8-10 pairs of lateral nerves; cup 6cm across. Figs in axillary pairs, sessile, tomentose when young, 1cm across, dark purple when ripe; basal bracts distinct.

Flowering and fruiting: March & May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark for boils, sores in mouth, constipation, cholera, dysentery, gonorrhoea, scabies; leaf on sores, for toothache; fruit for asthma; aerial root for atrophy, emaciation

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Navagraha vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Raashi vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

ATHASI

Botanical Name: *Linum usitatissimum* L.

Family: Linaceae

Kannada: Agase beeja

Hindi: Alsi

English: Common flax, Line

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Herbs. Leaves alternate, simple, stipules lateral. Flowers regular bisexual, sepals 5, petals 5, stamens 2 times as many as petals, filaments filiform. Ovary free, entire. Fruit a septicidal capsule.

Flowering and fruiting: April & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark and leaf; flower- cardiogenic, nervine; seed. Bark and leaf for gonorrhoea; seed for rheumatism, gout

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

AVARTHAKI

Botanical Name: *Cassia auriculata* L.

Family: Fabaceae - Caesalpinoidea

Kannada: Aavarike

Hindi: Aloon

English: Tanner's cassia

Distribution: Found in dry stony hills and on black cotton soil.

Description: Shrubs. Stipules large foliaceous, reniform, reflexed, persistent. Leaves 9cm long, leaflets 8-12 pairs, obtuse and minutely apiculate, 2x1cm; glands between leaflets subulate. Corymbs axillary and terminal, often paniced; bracts ovate, acuminate. Petals veined, Antheriformis stamens 6-7, 3 larger. Pod flat dehiscent 10x1.5cm, obtuse at apex with age.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- astringent; leaf & fruit- anthelmintic. Bark in skin diseases, sore throat; whole plant for diabetes, diuresis; seed in opthalmia, diabetes and chylous urine, conjunctivitis

Religious Importance: Worshiped in the all most all traditional poojas

BADARI

Botanical Name: *Ziziphus mauritiana* Lam.

Family: Rhamnaceae

Kannada: Bore hannu

Hindi: Badara

English: Indian jujube

Distribution: Found in dry and scrub forests, often cultivated in drier areas.

Description: Spinous tree; young branchlets tomentose. Leaves elliptic-ovate to orbicular, fulvous-tomentose beneath, to 6.5x3.5cm. Flowers small greenish, calyx 5, corolla 5, stamens 5 opposite to and enclosed in the pits. Disc 10-grooved. Ovary sunk in or adnate at the base to the disk 2-3 celled, rarely 4, free or connate, stigmas small, papillose. Fruit a globose or oblong drupe with a woody or bony 1-4 celled and seeded stone, seeds plano-convex, albumen 0 or scanty. Drupe to 0.7cm across, glabrous.

Flowering and fruiting: April & October

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- astringent, diaphoretic; fruit- cooling, anodyne, tonic. Root for headache, stomachache, dysentery; bark for colic; leaf in conjunctivitis, whooping cough

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

BAKULA

Botanical Name: *Mimusops elengi* L.

Family: Sapotaceae

Kannada: Bakula

Hindi: Bakul

English: Ape faced flower

Distribution: Found in coastal plains to semi-evergreen forests.

Description: Evergreen trees. Leaves alterante; stipules caducous; leaf blade elliptic-oblong acuminate at apex, acute or rounded at base. Flowers pedicelled, pedicel to 1.2cm long, sepals ovate, tomentose. Corolla white. Berry ellipsoid or subrotund, to 3.5x3cm. Seeds brown ellipsoid.

Flowering and fruiting: April & January

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark and fruit for diarrhoea, dysentery, fever; seed pounded and used as suppository for constipation

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Raashi vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

BHOONIMBA

Botanical Name: *Andrographis paniculata* (N.Burm.) Wall. ex Nees

Family: Acanthaceae

Kannada: Nela bevu

Hindi: Kaalmegh

English: Creat

Distribution: Found in all parts of the state, especially found well in drier parts of the state.

Description: An erect branched annual herb. Branches sharply quadrangular, often narrowly winged in the upper part. Leaves lanceolate, acute, glabrous, slightly undulate, pale beneath; base tapering; Flowers small, solitary, distant, forming a large pyramidal paniculate inflorescence, pedicels glandular, pubescent. Sepals equal, linear lanceolate, glandular. Corolla rose colour, hairy outside, 2 lipped, slightly enlarged below the limb. Filaments flattened, hairy in the upper part; anthers bearded at the base. Ovary glabrous; style slightly pubescent. Capsules linear oblong acute at both ends. Seeds numerous, subquadrate, rugosely pitted, glabrous, yellowish brown.

Flowering and fruiting: November-December & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- febrifuge, anodyne; root-febrifuge, stomachic, tonic, alterative anthelmintic. Root- for liver and spleen disorders, leaf- for stomach complaints of babies, syphilitic ulcers. Stem- for worms, dysentery, weakness, itching.

Religious Importance: Worshipped in the all most all traditional poojas

BIBHEETHAKA

Botanical Name: *Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertner) Roxb.

Family: Combretaceae

Kannada: Tare mara

Hindi: Bahera

English: Belleric Myrobalan

Distribution: Common in dry deciduous to semi-evergreen forests.

Description: Trees. Leaves alternate, clustered towards ends of branchlets; petiole to 10cm long; blade broadly obovate, cuneate to 17x14cm; glands 0. Spikes clustered towards apex, simple, to 25cm long. Flowers creamy white. Ovary with 2(-3) ovules. Fruit dry or fleshy, ovoid, slightly 5- ridged, brown pubescent, to 2.5x1.5cm.

Flowering and fruiting: February & August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark-diuretic; resin-demulcent, purgative; fruit-astringent, tonic, purgative. Bark for dysuria, sunstroke, cholera; resin for cramps; fruit for measles, leprosy, dropsy, rheumatic pain, ophthalmia; seed for gastric troubles

Religious Importance: Worshipped by hindus and a popular belief that God 'Shani' is inhabitant in this tree

BILVA

Botanical Name: *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Bilva pathre

Hindi: Bel

English: Bael tree

Distribution: Found in drier parts.

Description: Armed trees. Leaves trifoliate; leaflets petiolulate, entire or crenulate, membranous. Inflorescence an axillary panicle. Flowers pedicelled. Calyx campanulate, toothed, deciduous. Stamens many. Ovary ovoid 8- many locularovules many per locule, 2- seriate; style short, deciduous. Berry large smooth and woody outside, many locular and many seeded.

Flowering and fruiting: April & August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root antibiotic; Leaf astringent, digestive, fruit-astringent, digestive, febrifuge, cooling, laxative, aromatic, antibiotic, stomachic. Root-in fever, heart diseases; stem diarrhoea, dysentery; leaf-for diabetes, in convulsions, eye sores; fruit in diarrhoea, chronic dysentery, gonorrhoea.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Nakshathra vana, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

BRUHATHI

Botanical Name: *Solanum indicum* var. *multiflorum* C.B.Clarke ex Hk.f.

Family: Solanaceae

Kannada: Bitthi gulla

Distribution: Common in waste places and manure heaps near villages, often in vegetable gardens near hedges.

Description: Erect prickly shrub. Leaves alternate, sometimes subopposite, rusty tomentose, broadly ovate-oblong, deeply lobed. Younger parts brownish. Flowers in supra-axillary panicles. Corolla tubular, white, tube short, lobes 5, spreading, star-shaped. Stamens 5, filaments short, anthers connivent. Ovary 2-celled, ovules many in each cell, style slender, glabrous. Fruit a berry, yellow, globose, small.

Flowering and fruiting: September & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root effective remedy of inchuria, asthma, dysuria, cough, colic, catarrh, worms, difficult parturition, fevers and toothache; leaf to cease vomiting; leaf and fruit applied externally for itch

Religious Importance: Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

BRUNGARAJA

Botanical Name: *Eclipta alba* (L.) Hassk.

Family: Asteraceae

Kannada: Garugada soppu

Hindi: Bhangra

English: The kesuri

Distribution: Common marsh weed found in all regions of the state.

Description: Annual prostrate white-hairy herb, rooting at nodes or erect; upto 4cm high. Leaves opposite, simple, oblong-lanceolate, entire, acute, strigose or appressed hairy, upto 6 x 8cm. Heads axillary, solitary or paired, heterogamous, rayed; involucral bracts 8, ovate, acute, hairy. Corolla white, ligulate in female, spreading, 2-lobed at the tip, tubular in bisexual, 4-5 lobed; lobes acute. Stamens 5; anther obtuse, not tailed. Fruit an achene, 3-angled or compressed, slightly winged; black, pyramidal at the apex, minutely warty; pappus.

Flowering and fruiting : July & September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant for elephantiasis, skin rash, leucoderma, hepatic and spleen disorders; root on wounds, ulcers; leaf for gastric and hepatic troubles

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja

CHAMPAKA

Botanical Name: *Michelia champaca* L.

Family: Magnoliaceae

Kannada: Sampige mara

Hindi: Champaka

English: Champaka tree

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests and rarely found in dry forests.

Description: A tall evergreen tree with a valuable tree. Leaves enveloped in bud in their connate stipules, more than 4" long. Flowers solitary, axillary or terminal. Sepals and petals 9-15 or more in 3 or more rows. Stamens numerous. Ovary with carpels in spike; stigma decurrent; ovules 2 or more. Fruit a lax or sense spike. Seeds pendulous.

Flowering and fruiting: March & August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root bark purgative; bark stimulant, diuretic, febrifuge; flower tonic, carminative, diuretic. Root on abscesses and inflammations, bark for abortion.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja

CHANAKA

Sacred Plants

Botanical Name: *Cicer arietinum* L.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Kadale, hasikadale

Hindi: Chana

English: Chik pea

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Low bushy pea-like annual with hairy stems. Leaves comprising several pairs of small leaflets. Racemes. Flowers pinkish in colour. The edible seeds, born in pods, are roughly globular, flattened on the sides, somewhat wrinkled, and about 1/3 inch in diameter.

Flowering and fruiting: December and January

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Leaves- astringent, stomachic, laxative; seeds- stimulant, tonic, aprodisiac, anthelmintic. Leaves used to treat diabetes, relieve sprains, dislocated limbs, indigestion, dysentery, diarrhoea; seeds for bronchitis, biliousness, leprosy and skin diseases

Religious Importance: Used in Navagraha homa as Navagraha danya

CHIRABILVA

Botanical Name: *Holoptelea integrifolia* (Roxb.) Planchon

Family: Urticaceae

Kannada: Tapasi

Hindi: Banchilla

English: Jungle cork tree

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests in southern India

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaves entire, penninerved, stipules lateral. Flowers fasciculate. Tepala imbricate, occasionally unequal. Stamens as many as

repals with hairy anthers. Ovary stipitate, compressed, tipped by stigmatic styles arms. Fruit a samara; Wing membranous or chartaceous.

Flowering and fruiting: January & February

Religious Importance: Worshiped by Buddhist

CHOOtha

Botanical Name: *Mangifera indica* L.

Family: Anacardiaceae

Kannada: Maavina mara

Hindi: Amra

English: Mango tree

Distribution: Found wild in dry deciduous and moist deciduous forests across Karnataka.

Description: Large evergreen tree. Leaves alternate, simple, exstipulate, 20x5cm. Inflorescence a terminal panicle. Flowers polygamous, sepals 5, petals 5 adnate to the disc. Stamens 4. Ovary superior, ovule solitary. Fruit a fleshy drupe, orange yellow.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark, gum, fruit, seed, for fever of sunstroke, cholera, sty in eye, ulcerated tongue, for hemiplagia, diarrhoea, dysentery, stomach ache, poisoning, for uterine haemorrhage, jaundice; gum for toothache; fruit for pain in abdomen and thirst; seed for asthma

Flowering and fruiting: March & April

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Ashoka vana, Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Nandana vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Raashi vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

DAADIMA

Sacred Plants

Botanical Name: *Punica granatum* L.

Family: Punicaceae

Kannada: Daalimbe

Hindi: Anar

English: Pomegranate

Distribution: Often grown in gardens for ornament and for the edible fruits.

Description: A shrub or a small tree; buds and young shoots reddish. Leaves 2.5-5X1-2 cm, short-petioled, oblong or oval-lanceolate, glabrous, glabrous and shining. Flowers orange-red, 2.5-3.7 cm across. Calyx tube campanulate or tubular, leathery; lobes 5-8, thick, persistent, valvate. Petals 5-8, inserted on the edge of the calyx-tube, wrinkled, imbricate. Stamens numerous, inserted on the calyx tube. Fruit subglobose, 5-12 cm across, yellowish green to reddish, crowned by the persistent calyx. Seeds surrounded by crimson or pink acid pulp.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root bark for expelling tapeworms; as astringent for diarrhoea, dysentery. Flower buds for bronchitis. Fruit for cholera, and diarrhoea. Leaf used for conjunctivitis.

Religious Importance: Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

. DARBA

Botanical Name: *Saccharum spontaneum* L.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Darbhe hullu

Hindi: Kagara

English: Thatch grass

Distribution: Found on bunds of paddy fields and along banks of the rivers, in plains and upper ghats of Western ghats.

Description: Tall perennial shrub. Leaves linear-lanceolate. Stout perennial erect culms. Inflorescence a contracted or spreading panicle composed of spike-like racemes, spikelets in pairs, one pedicelled, one sessile. 2-flowered, covered by hairs from the base. Glumes subequal, chartaceous below. L1 slightly shorter, hyaline, epaleate. L2 sometime wanting, shorter than glumes. lodicules 2, stamens 3. Style 2, free.

Flowering and fruiting: January

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- laxative, aphodisiac. Whole plant remedy to burning sensations, biliousness, strangury, blood diseases

Religious Importance: Navagraha vana

DATTURA

Botanical Name: *Datura stramonium* L.

Family: Solanaceae

Kannada: Dhatthoora

Hindi: Datura

English: Thorn apple

Distribution: Found in waste lands in all districts.

Description: An annual herb. Leaves simple, alternate, cauline and ramal, petiolate, ovate-lanceolate, acuminate or acute apex, unequal at base, sinuate, toothed or repand margin, glabrous on both sides. Inflorescence solitary, axillary. Flowers shortly pedicellate, ebracteate, bisexual, obliquely zygomorphic, complete, pentamerous, large. Calyx 5, tubular, angulate, toothed, lanceolate, acuminate. Corolla 5, infundibuliform or funnel shaped, 5 or 6 cuspidate acute angles, white. Stamens 5. Ovary 2-celled, superior, as the carpels are placed obliquely, bilocular, many ovules in each locule, style long, stigma bilobed, dome shaped, ovary wall prickly. Fruit a spiny septifragal capsule opening by 4 apical valves.

Flowering and fruiting: October & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf, flower top, seed- antispasmodic, narcotic. Leaf, flower top and seed controls salivation, smoke of leaf inhaled for asthma, used in ophthalmology, rheumatism

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Saptharshi vana, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

DEVADAARU

Botanical Name: *Cedrus deodara* (Roxb. ex Lambert) G. Don

Family: Pinaceae

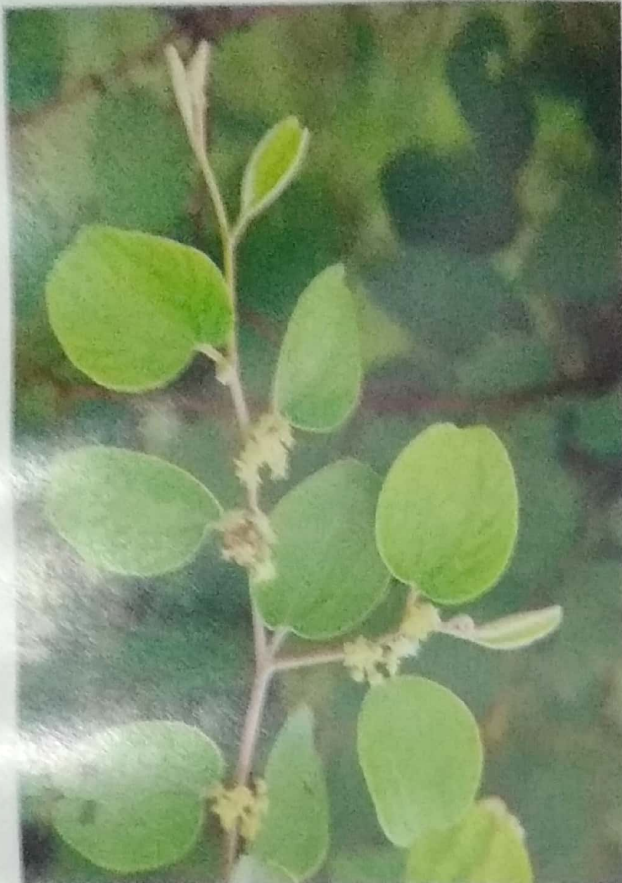
Kannada: Devadaaru

English: Cedar

Distribution: Found distributed in higher altitudinal ranges of North India and also cultivated in gardens

Description: Large trees. Young trees have a broad pyramidal crown that becomes wider with age; branch tips and leaders droop and have a fine texture. In the landscape it can reach 80 feet tall but becomes much taller in its native range. Initially smooth and gray-brown, later developing short furrows with scaly ridge tops. Leaves evergreen needles, dark green but may have some silvery bloom giving them a blue-green color; 1 to 2 inches long, sharp pointed; occur singly on new growth and then later on spur shoots; remaining on the tree for 3 to 6 years. Flowers monoecious; male cones 2 to 3 inches long on the lower parts of crown; female cones erect, purplish, occur on upper portions of crown. Fruits upright cones, 3 to 4 inches long and 3 inches across; deciduous scales; initially green and purplish, then later turning a reddish brown when mature, usually resinous.

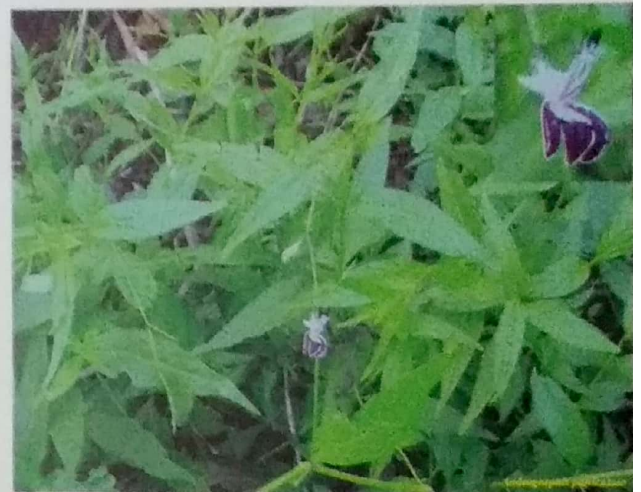
Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja



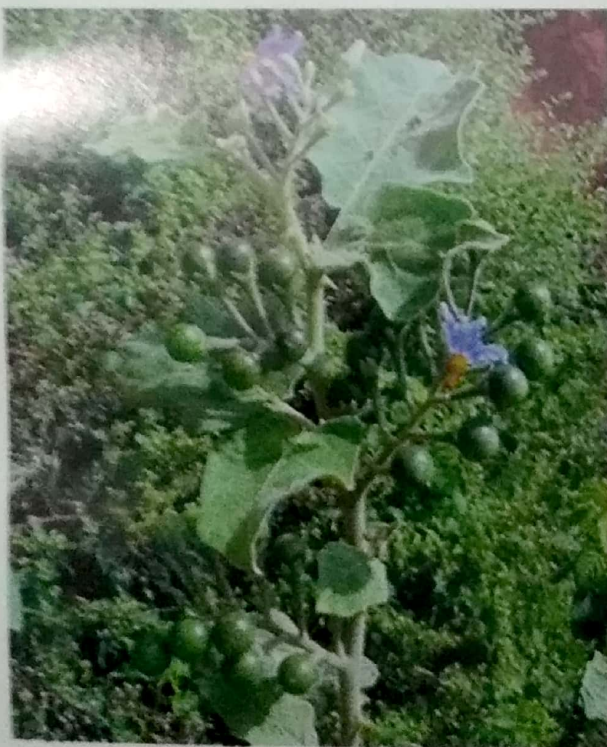
Ziziphus mauritiana



Mimusops elengi



Andrographis paniculata



Solanum indicum var. *multiflorum*



Terminalia bellirica



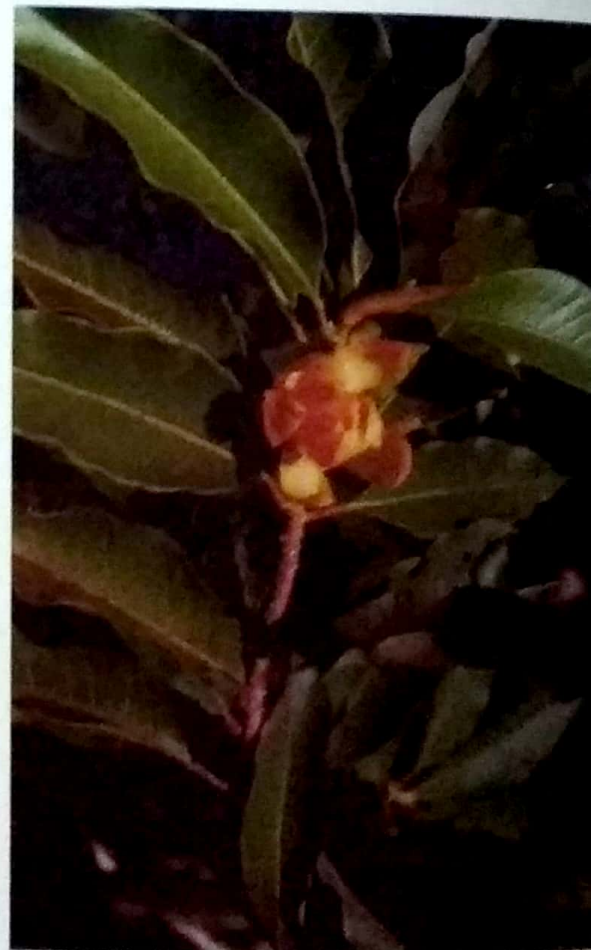
Eclipta prostrata



Aegle marmelos



Cicer arietinum



Michelia champaca

Sacred Plants



Holoptelia integrifolia



Mangifera indica



Punica granatum



Cedrus deodara



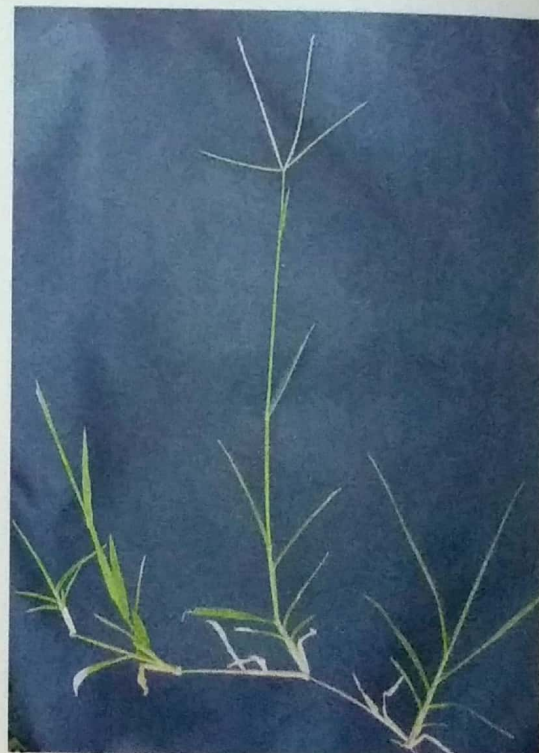
Datura stramonium



Saccharum spontaneum



Vitis vinifera



Cynodon dactylon

DOORVA

Botanical Name: *Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Garike hullu

Hindi: Durba

English: Bermuda grass

Distribution: Found in barren lands and cultivated lands.

Description: Perennial herbs with slender creeping rhizome. Culms tall rooting at nodes. Leaves linear acute, rigid, convolute, glabrous; sheath smooth; ligule with a conspicuous ring. Inflorescence a terminal fascicled spike; rachis pubescent at the base, glumes lanceolate, acute, mucronate; upper glume longer than the lower, keeled smooth. Lemma oblong, apiculate, ciliate. Palea scaberulous. Stamens 3, anthers oblong. Grain oblong.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant for antifertility in women, dropsy, epilepsy; leaf for dropsy, bleeding piles, urinary complaints

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Navagraha vana, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

DRAAKSHA

Botanical Name: *Vitis vinifera* L.

Family: Vitaceae

Kannada: Draakshi

Hindi: Angoor

English: Grapes

Distribution: Cultivated in the garden.

Description: Climbing shrubs, with tendrils opposite to the leaves or on the peduncles. Leaves simple, variously lobed; stipules 2, deciduous. Flowers polygamo-dioecious, in leaf-opposed thyrses. Calyx cupular, with 5 obscure teeth. Petals 5, coherent by their tips and deciduous as a calyptra. Stamens 5, filaments slender, long in male shorter in female anthers introse. Ovary 2-celled, 2 ovules in each cell; styles very short or 0; stigma obtuse. Fruit a 2-celled succulent berry. Seeds 2 or less, pyriform, 2-furrowed on the face, 1-furrowed on the back with a prominent rounded or elliptic chalaza.

Flowering and fruiting: October & March - April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Young twigs; leaf- astringent; fruit- laxative, stomachic, diuretic, demulcent, cooling. Young twigs for skin afflictions; leaf for diarrhoea, toothache

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

DRONA

Botanical Name: *Leucas cephalotes* (Roth) Spreng.

Family: Lamiaceae

Kannada: Dronapushpi

Hindi: Dhurpisag

Distribution: Found in all district as weed.

Description: Herb. Leaves membranous, crenate, pubescent, 4' x 1.5". Flowers in whorls, terminal, globose, 1-2" in diam; bracts foliaceous, imbricate, lanceolate green membranous, 0.5-0.75', calyx tubular. Ovary 4- partite, style subulate at apex. Fruit of 4 ovoid triquertous obtuse dry nutlets.

Flowering and fruiting: September & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- stimulant, diaphoretic, laxative, anthelmintic, antiseptic, insecticidal. Whole plant used to treat bronchitis, jaundice, inflammations, asthma, dyspepsia, paralysis, intermittent fevers, skin diseases.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana

GANAKI

Botanical Name: *Plumeria rubra* L.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Daevaganigalu

English: Frangipani

Distribution: Native to tropical America-Cultivated throughout tropics. Occasional near villages and temples.

Description: A small tree Leaves oblong, 8-1 in long, acute at both ends and borne during the rainy season, and whorled, entire, glabrous, 10-12 nerved, 10"x2.8". Cymes, corolla white, yellow, or mixed with red and white, stamens 5. Flowers are white with a golden center, very fragrant Ovary superior, fruit a drupe.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Latex used in treating Eczema.

Religious Importance: Used in Ganesha chaturthi. Trees growing near temples as sacred tree.

GANAKI

Botanical Name: *Solanum americanum* Mill.

Family: Solanaceae

Kannada: Kaaki hannu

English: Commom night shade

Distribution: Found in the waste lands, roadsides, and cultivated lands throughout the state.

Description: Urmid herb. Leaves entire or slightly toothed, ovate, decurrent on the petiole, glabrous or sparsely pubescent. Cyme umbellate, axillary or lateral, 4-8 flowered. Pedicels to 8 cm long. Calyx campanulate. Corolla white, 0.5 cm long. Anthers connivent into a cone around the style, poricidal. Ovary superior, 2-locular, ovules many, axillary, style simple, filiform, stigma dilated to 2-lobed. Fruit a berry globose, glabrous, seeds minutely pitted.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- antispasmodic, diuretic, laxative; leaf- stomachic; fruit- tonic, diuretic, appetizer. Whole plant for cirrhosis of liver, fever; leaf for dropsy; fruit for heart ailments. Skin diseases

Religious Importance: Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

GIRIKARNIKA

Botanical Name: *Clitoria ternatea* L.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Shankha pushpi

Hindi: Gokarni

English: Blue mouse ear

Distribution: Cultivated in gardens and everywhere, but also found in hedges and thickets.

Description: Glabrescent slender twiners. Leaf rachis to 8cm long; leaflets 5-7 elliptic, obtuse or retuse, glabrous above, pubescent, to 5x3cm. Flowers solitary. Petals white with or without blue border; standard with orange centre. Pod pubescent 9x11cm.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- cooling, laxative, diuretic, anthelmintic; seed- laxative. Root for goitre and leprosy, leaf for swellings

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja

GUNDRA

Botanical Name: *Typha angustata* Chaub. & Bory

Family: Typhaceae

Kannada: Aane jondu

Hindi: Aerak

English: Indian reed plant

Distribution: Found in marshy areas in all regions about 2,500 ft.

Description: Robust marsh herb. Leaves distichous, linear, partly radical, partly cauline, thick spongy, sheathing at base. Rhizome creeping, stem robust, terete. Inflorescence terminal of 2 or 3 spikes, upper spike male, lower one female, bracts foliar, early deciduous. Flowers numerous, closely aggregated. Fruit nutlet fusiform.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Rootstock- diuretic, astringent.

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

HARICHAMP

Botanical name: *Artabotrys hexapetalus* (L.f.) Bhandari

Family: Annonaceae

Kannada: Manoranjani

English name: Fragrant heart's joy

Distribution: Frequently cultivated in the garden and near houses for its scented flowers cultivated.

Description: Aromatic shrub. Leaves glabrescent, petioled linear lanceolate, 5"x.9". Flowers solitary, axillary and terminal. Flowers with 9 tepals, outer 3 sepaloid, inner six sepaloid, stamens numerous. Fruit an etario of follicles.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Flowers- stimulant. Flowers-To treat vomiting, diseases of blood, heart and bladder, itching, leucoderma; leaf- to treat cholera Ayurveda.

Religious Importance: A bushy shrub growing near temples.

HARITAKI

Botnical name: *Terminalia chebula* Retz.

Family: Combretaceae

Kannada: Alalekaayi

Hind: Harad

English: Chebulic myrobalan

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests of Southern Karnataka.

Description: Trees. Leaves alternate or sub- opposite; glands sessile, at the apex of the petiole; blade elliptic oblong, rounded at both ends, to 10x7cm. Spike short, usually simple. Flowers white or pale yellow. Ovary with 2(-3) ovules. Fruit ovoid, entire glabrous, to 3.5x2.5cm.

Flowering and fruiting: Janaury & September

Medicinal properties and uses: Bark- diuretic, cardi tonic; fruit- laxative, cardi tonic, stomachic, alterative. Bark for eczema, diarrhoea, constipation; fruit for dysentery, measles, dentrifices.

Religious importance: Worshiped by Hindus

HAYAMAARAKA

Botanical Name: *Wrightia tinctoria* R. Br.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Beppaale

Hindi: Meeta indrajava

English: Dyers oleander

Distribution: Common in dry deciduous forests of the state.

Description: Small trees in scrub forests. Leaves opposite, entire, latex present, glabrous. Flowers in axillary and terminal cymes, white. Calyx lobes 5, corolla funnel shaped. Stamens 5 inserted near the mouth of the corolla tube. Ovary of 2 free, connate carpels, ovules many. Fruit of 2 connate or distinct follicular mericarps. Seeds linear.

Flowering and fruiting: March & April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- laxative; seed-aphrodisiac, anthelmintic. Bark for bilious troubles; leaf for toothache, asthma, throat trouble

Religious Importance: Worshipped by buddist

HINTHALA

Botanical Name: *Phoenix paludosa* Roxb.

Family: Arecaceae

Distribution: Generally found growing in coastal areas

Description: Unbranched, perennial palm, upto a height of 5 m or more with top foliages and sharp spines in the stem and leaf apex. Stem slender, cylindrical, unbranched upto 10.5 cm diam., covered with dark fibrous sheath and long, pointed base, distinct leaf scars, encircling the stem. Leaves pinnately compound and rachis spirally arranged on the top of the stem. Base of the rachis sharp spiny and stem base to mostly covered with spines or fibrous leaf sheaths. Inflorescence spadix, peduncle branched, spathe 45 cm long, boat shaped, yellow, spongy glabrous, deciduous. Male flowers sessile, erect, 0.65 cm long and 0.45

cm across. Sepals 3, gamosepalous, cup-shaped, glabrous, valvate, stout. Petals 3, polypetalous, ovate-lanceolate, entire, acute, curved, thick, glabrous, imbricate. Stamens 6, free, sessile. Female flowers sessile, erect, 0.5 cm long and 0.35 cm across. Sepals 3, gamosepalous, cup shaped, glabrous, valvate, stout. Petals 3, imbricate, ovate, curved, entire, acute, thick. Carpels 3, syncarpous, ovary superior, dumbel shaped. Style 0, stigma 3, short. Fruit a drupe (Sea-date) shining, black when ripe. Seeds woody, very hard on maturity.

Flowering and fruiting: December

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

INDRAVAARUNI

Botanical Name: *Citrullus colocynthis* (L.) Schrader

Family: Cucurbitaceae

Kannada: Haavu mekke kayi

Hindi: Indrayana

English: Colocynth

Distribution: Found in drier regions of the state.

Description: A trailing scabrid herb. Leaves tri-angular-ovate, deeply 3-5 lobed, the midlobe elongate, all sinuately pinnatifid. Flowers monoecious, yellow, both male and female solitary, rather large. Calyx tube broadly campanulate, lobes 5. Corolla usually rotate, the petals ovate or obovate, obtuse or emarginate. Stamens 3. Ovary ovoid, 1-celled; ovules many on 3 vertical placements; style short; stigmas 3, thick, reniform; in male flowers pistillode glandular. Fruit a globose or oblong, compressed, smooth.

Flowering and fruiting: May & February

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root used as abortifacient; for jaundice and urinary disease. Fruit used as purgative, galactagogue; extract from fruit pulp effective on bacteria.

Religious Importance: Worshipped during car festival of Biligiri Ranga Swamy temple

IRUVANTHIKA

Botanical Name: *Jasminum sambac* (L.) Alston

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Aelusutthina mallige

Hindi: Mogra

English: Arabian jasmine

Distribution: Tadiandamol, Madikeri, Somwarpet.

Description: Climbing shrubs. Leaves variable, usually ovate, obtuse or acute or even acuminate, membranous; opposite, rarely alternate, simple trifoliate or imparipinnate. Flowers sweet scented in terminal or axillary corymbose cymes, rarely solitary; bracts linear, calyx tube funnel shaped or campanulate 0.25" long, corolla tube more or less elongate lobes 4- 10, stamens 2 usually included in corolla tube. Ovary 2- celled; ovules 2 in each cell, attached near the base, style filiform, fruit a didynamous berry or simple by the suppression of one carpel; carpel globose. Seeds in each carpel 1 rarely 2, erect.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- coolant; root- emmenagogue; flower-lactifuge. Whole plant for insanity, weak vision, mouth afflictions

Religious Importance: Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja.

JAAJI

Botanical Name: *Acacia farnesiana* (L.) Willd.

Family: Fabaceae-Mimosoideae

Kannada: Kastoori jali

Hindi: Bukikar

English: Fragrant Acacia

Distribution: Found in scrub and dry deciduous forests of Deccan, cultivated and run wild, quite naturalized.

Description: Small trees. Leaves 5 cm long; stipular spines straight, to 3.5 cm long; petiole gland near the middle; pinnae 5-7 pairs, 2 cm long; leaflets 15-20 pairs. Heads 1.3 cm across, orange; peduncle 3-4 cm long, corolla twice as long as calyx. Pod subcylindrical, dehiscent, 6 cm long, 1 cm thick, obtuse or hooked at apex, slightly curved, faintly striate, 4-6 seeded.

Flowering and fruiting: August & March

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root for carbuncle, convulsions, sores; leaf for eye diseases; stem bark for epilepsy, rabies, cholera, snake bite.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

JAMBEERA

Botanical Name: *Ocimum gratissimum* L.

Family: Lamiaceae

Kannada: Nibmba thulasi

Hindi: Bantulsi

English: Lemon basil

Distribution: Found in Deccan and Carnatic, in low country, cultivated and probably introduced only, chiefly found on waste land and near villages.

Description: Shrub. Leaves membranous, ovate acute, cuneate and decurrent at base coarsely serrate, nearly glabrous except on the nerves, long-petioled upto 4' long 2" broad. Inflorescence a raceme often 6' long, the whorls close and about 0.3" apart; upper calyx - lip longer than the lower, rounded and curved upwards in fruit, teeth of the lower short. Ovary 4-partite; style slender, bifid at apex. Fruit of 4 dry, smooth or subrugose, nutlets, often mucilaginous when wetted.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant, leaf, seed. Whole plant to treat paralysis and rheumatism; leaf for gonorrhoea and seminal weakness; seed for neuralgia and headache

Religious Importance: Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja

JAMBOO

Botanical Name: *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skssls

Family: Myrtaceae

Kannada: Jambu naerale

Hindi: Jamun

English: Black plum

Distribution: Found in evergreen and dry deciduous Forests.

Description: Trees. Petiole 1-3cm long; blade chartaceous, ovate or elliptic-lanceolate, acute, acuminate, or rarely obtuse, narrowed at base, 5.6-17x2-7cm; lateral nerves distinct beneath. Flowers small, in ramiflorous or axillary, panicle cymes. Calyx tube lobed, to 0.5x0.5cm. Corolla calyptrate. Berry globose or oblong, purple when ripe, juicy.

Flowering and fruiting: February & september

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Shoot and leaf; bark; fruit- carminative; leaf; seed. Shoot and leaf for diarrhoea; bark for dysentery; fruit for diabetes, indigestion; seed for diabetes

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Nandana vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja

JAPAA

Botanical Name: *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* L.

Family: Malvaceae

Kannada: Daasavaal

Hindi: Gudhal

English: Chi rose

Distribution: Extensively grown in Karnataka.

Description: Shrub. Leaves lanceolate serrate. Flowers red, solitary or in groups of 3-5 staminal tube much exserted. Ovary 5- celled; ovules 3 or more in each cell; styles 5, connate below; stigmas usually capitate. Capsule loculicidally 5-valved.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root, leaf- emollient, anodyne, laxative; flower- emollient, aphrodisiac. Root for gonorrhoea, flower for fever, skin diseases

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

JATAADHAARA

Botanical Name: *Asparagus racemosus* Willd

Family: Liliaceae

Kannada: Shataavari

Hindi: Satavar

English: Butter milk root

Distribution: Found in all forests and bunds of the fallow fields.

Description: Woody climbers, usually armed; rootstock with fascicled, tuberous roots. Stem branching, smooth, terete, woody; branches angular. Leaves reduced to recurved spinescent scales. Cladodes slightly compressed, triquetrous, acuminate, falcate. Spines longer (6 cm) decurved. Flowers solitary, clustered, umbelled or racemose, axillary with scarious, keeled bracts. Flowers white, small, with jointed pedicels. Ovary superior, 3 locular but 2 aborting; style short stigmas 3. Fruit a subglobose, berry with 1-6 smooth black seeds.

Flowering and fruiting: August & September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- stomachic, tonic, astringent, galactagogue, aphrodisiac, alterative; leaf. Roots- To treat dysentery, tumours, nervous disorders, liver disorders, rheumatism, leucorrhoea; leaf- to relieve scabies

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja

JATAMAANSI

Botanical Name: *Nardostachys jatamansi* DC.

Family: Valerianaceae

Kannada: Jatamansi

Hindi: Jatalasi

English: Indian nard

Distribution: Found in cultivated beds and sunny edges.

Description: Perennial growing to 0.25m by 0.25m. It is in flower from. The scented flowers are hermaphrodite (have both male and female organs).

Flowering and fruiting: August & September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Rhizome constitute the drug Jatamansi or Nardus root, used as a substitute for valerian. It yields essential oil, known as Spikenard Oil, which possess antiarrhythmic activity with possible usefulness in cases of auricular flutter. Oil exerts has a distant depressant action on central nervous system. rhizomes are tonic, stimulant, antispasmodic, diuretic, deobstruent, emmenagogue, stomachic, and laxative; their infusion given in leprosy, hysteria, palpitation of heart and chorea. a tincture of rhizomes given for intestinal colic and flatulence. Spikenard Oil improves hair growth and darkens the hair.

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians.

JOYTISHMATI

Botanical name: *Celastrus paniculatus* Willd

Family: Celastraceae

Kannada: Bavanga beeja

Hindi: Malkangani

English: Climbing straff plant

Distribution: Found in deciduous to semi-evergreen forests in coastal Karnataka.

Description: Deciduous shrubby climber. Leaves alternate, 5-10x3-5cm, ovate, elliptic, crenulate. Inflorescence terminal cymes collected into thyrsoid panicles. Flowers polygamous, 5- merous. Sepals fimbriate at tip. Stamens inserted just outside disc. Ovary not immersed in disc, (2-) 3- locular; ovules 2 in each cell, basal stigma 3- lobed and spreading. Capsule 3- valved, loculicidal, 1- 6 seeded. Seeds crimson - arillate.

Flowering and fruiting: April and June

Medicinal properties and uses: Root and leaf for headache; fruit for scabies, skin diseases, dysentery, diarrhoea; bark for wounds, colds, cough, fever; seed for piles and digestive troubles, seed oil for rheumatism.

Religious Importance: Worshiped in Gowri and Dasara festival.

KAANCHANA

Botanical Name: *Toddalia asiatica* (L.) Lam.

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Dodda kaadu menasu

Hindi: Dahan

English: Lopez-root tree

Distribution: Common in dry deciduous to scrub forests.

Description: Scandent shrubs with stout branches with prickles on the stem. Leaflets digitately trifoliate, obovate - ovate, to 12x4cm, coriaceous. Flowers pedicelled, abortively unisexual, 2-5 merous. Peduncle 4-12 cm long. Flowers in umbellules, white. Ovary oblong, shortly stalked, oblong or globose, 2-7 locular; a style short or 0; stigma capitate. Fruit fleshy or coriaceous; seeds angular, reniform.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root bark- diaphoretic, stomachic, antipyretic, antiperiodic, carminative, tonic; leaf, fruit. Leaf for pain in bowels; fruit to relieve burning sensation in stomach

Religious Importance: Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja

KAARASYARA

Botanical Name: *Strychnos nux-vomica* L.

Family: Loganiaceae

Kannada: Kaasaraka, Nangina koradu

Hindi: Bailewa

English: Nux-vomica

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests.

Description: A moderate-sized or large deciduous tree. Leaves opposite, usually coriaceous, with 3-5 or more ribs starting from or starting from or a little above the base, main nerves transverse joining the midrib and upper side ribs. Cymes terminal, 1-2 in in diam., many flowered, corolla-tube only slightly hairy near the base within. Calyx 5 or 4-lobed. Stamens 5 or 4 adnate to the corolla-tube, filaments short. Ovary 2-celled, or 1-celled above, ovules 2-lobed. Fruit a berry, globose, indehiscent, with a hardened pericarp. Seeds many, compressed.

Flowering and fruiting: January & November

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root and bark- febrifuge; leaf; seed- tonic, stimulant, emetic, febrifuge, neuralgic. Root and bark for epilepsy, stomach ache; leaf on infested ulcers; seed for paralysis

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

KAATTU MALLI

Botanical name: *Millingtonia hortensis* L.f.

Family: Bignoniaceae

Kannada: Akash mallige, beratu

English: Indian cork tree

Distribution: Found in plain districts, as avenues and gardens and often found run wild. May be a native of Burma.

Description: A tall tree with corky bark. Leaves opposite, 2-3 pinnate, the leaflets entire or crenate. Flowers terminal corymbose panicles. Calyx small,

campanulate, truncate or with 5 short teeth. Corolla white, tube long, slender, limb obscurely bilabiate, lobes 5, subequal. Stamens 4, didynamous, shortly exsert. Ovary subsessile, cylindric-conical, ovules many 1-or more-seriate, style slender, stigma 2-lobed. Fruit an elongate linear capsule compressed parallel to the septum. Seeds very many, flattened, with a broad hyaline wing.

Flowering and fruiting: September and December

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Bark yields an inferior type of cork, contains a bitter substance and tannin used as an antipyretic.

Religious Importance: Tree growing near temples.

KADALI

Botanical Name: *Musa paradisiaca* L.

Family: Musaceae

Kannada: Baale

Hindi: Kela

English: Banana

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Tall perennial tree-like herb, 10-15 feet height, cultivated or wild. Leaves radical, simple, large entire, petiole, alternate, elliptical, obtuse, leaf base sheathing, unicostate parallel venation. Stem underground rhizome, the aerial pseudostem. Compound spadix, covered with large, violet, pink coloured bracts called spathe. The male flowers are arranged towards the apex and female, towards the base of the spadix, bisexual flowers in the mid bracts. Perianth 6, arranged in 2 whorls of 3 each. Ovary present either in pistillate or bisexual flower, tricarpeal, inferior, many ovules, style simple, stigma 3-6 lobed. Fruit a berry, seedless, mesocarp edible.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root for bite of lizard, diarrhoea, dysentery; sap for mucous in urine; leaf for vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma, whooping cough;



Plumeria rubra



Clitoria ternatea



Solanum americanum



Typha angustata



Artabotrys hexapetalus



Terminalia chebula



Wrightia tinctoria



Citrullus colocynthis



Phoenix paludosa



Acacia farnesiana



Jasminum sambac

Sacred Plants



Ocimum gratissimum



Syzygium cumini



Hibiscus rosa-sinensis



Nardostachys jatamansi



Celastrus paniculatus



Asparagus racemosus



Toddalia asiatica



Strychnos nux-vomica



Millingtonia hortensis



Musa paradisiaca



Anthocephalus chinensis

flower for juice for diseases of blood; fruit for smallpox, diabetes, nephritis, gout, hypertension

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja

KADAMBA

Botanical Name: *Anthocephalus chinensis* Walp.

Family: Rubiaceae

Kannada: Kadamba

Hindi: Kadamba

English: Cadamba tree

Distribution: Deciduous tree found in evergreen forests.

Description: Large trees. Leaves obovate elliptic, 20x12cm long. Inflorescence a raceme or panicle. Flowers bisexual, irregular. Calyx provided with a conspicuous gland without. Petals clawed, unequal. Ovary bilocular, becomes tetra locular due to false septum.

Flowering and fruiting: January & August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flowers receptacle edible. Bark tonic and febrifuge, seed for fever, sunstroke, cholera, dysentery; antifertility agent. Flowers yield an essential oil. Leaves ground with young leaves of *Ficus religiosa* and bark of *Phyllanthus emblica*, used for sores, carbuncles and also used for anemia.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Nandana vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja

KADHIRA

Botanical Name: *Acacia catechu* (Roxb.) Willd

Family: Fabaceae-Mimosoideae

Kannada: Kaggali mara

Hindi: Kachu

English: Black catechu

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests of Deccan.

Description: Trees. Stipular spines 0.5 cm. Petiole gland near the middle; rachis 15 cm long, with gland between the uppermost pair of pinnae; pinnae 20-25 pairs, 4 cm long; leaflets 30-35 pairs. Flowers in spikes. Pod flat, smooth, stalked, 7x1.6 cm.

Flowering and fruiting: July & December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf, fruit, stem- astringent. Used to cure skin diseases, leprosy, pruritis, bronchial asthma, diabetis, stomatis, diarrhoea, styptic ulcers, skin eruption. A third product extracted from old tree called Kheersal, is used medicinally for sore throat and cough.

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Navagraha vana, Raashi vana, Shivapanchayathana vana

KAKKOLA

Botanical Name: *Luvunga sarmentosa* (Blume) Kurz

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Jeevani

Hindi: Kaakoli

Distribution: Common undergrowth of moist deciduous to evergreen forests of Western ghats.

Description: Glabrous armed limbing shrubs. Leaves digitately trifoliate; leaflets petiolulate, entire, coriaceous. Inflorescence axillary. Flowers pedicelled. Calyx cupular, entire or lobed, 6- toothed, persistent staminal filaments free or connate below. Disc annular or cupular. Ovary shortly stalked, 2- 4 locular; styles erect, short, deciduous; stigma capitate. Fruit an ovoid berry 1- 3 seeded.

Flowering and fruiting: December-March & January-August

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

KALHARA

Botanical Name: *Nymphaea nouchali* N.Burm.

Family: Nymphaeaceae

Kannada: Neela thaavare

Hindi: Kanval

English: Blue lotus of India

Distribution: Found in open tanks in most of the regions.

Description: Perennial, stoloniferous, aquatic herbs. Leaf blade entire to bluntly toothed, green above, pale-purple and glabrous below, 10-25x8-20cm. Sepals green, with purple dots, petals white, less often bluish or red. Staminal connectives distinctly exceeding anthers.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Rhizome- demulcent; flower- cardiotonic. Rhizome for dysentery and diarrhoea

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja.

KANINEEKA

Botanical name: *Ficus amplissima* Smith

Kannada: Bilibasuri

Hindi: Pakri

English: Wave-leaved fig tree

Distribution: Evergreen tree found in drier regions.

Description: Large spreading trees, sometimes with aerial roots. Leaf blade ovate, slightly acuminate at apex, rounded or shortly cuneate at base, to 10x6cm, glabrous, coriaceous with 3 basal nerves; lateral nerves 10-12 pairs, distinct beneath. Inflorescence a hypanthodium, figs in axillary pairs, sessile, globular,

glabrous, 1.5cm across; basal bracts 4, small, scarious. Ovary sessile or stalked; style lateral; stigma various. Fruit a fig.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Religious Importance: Tree worshiped by Hindu woman's.

KAPITTHA

Botanical Name: *Limonia acidissima* L.

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Baela

Hindi: Katbel

English: Wood apple

Distribution: Commonly found in dry deciduous forests.

Description: Shrubs. Leaves alternate, trifoliate, petiole and rachis winged. Flowers in fascicles racemes or panicles. Calyx 4 lobed, corolla 4 lobed. Ovary 4-celled, style short, fruit a globose 4 celled berry, seeds ovoid or flattened.

Flowering and fruiting: March & September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- tonic, antiscorbutic, alexiformic, astringent, stomachic, stimulant; bark, leaves- aromatic, astringent. Fruit pulp to cure bites of venomous insects and reptiles; bark to cure biliousness; leaves for digestive troubles

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja

KARAVEERA

Botanical Name: *Nerium oleander* L.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Kanigilu

Hindi: Kanaer

English: Oleandr rosebay

Distribution: Beautiful shrub growing near houses, temple and Gardens.

Description: Cultivated shrub. Leaves simple, verticillate in whorls of 3, exstipulate, petiolate, lanceolate, entire, acute, coriaceous, thick, leathery, apex acute, unicostate reticulate venation. Inflorescence terminal racemose cyme. Flowers bracteate, ebracteolate, bisexual, pentamerous, pedicellate, red or white, sweet scented corona hairy. Calyx 5, deeply lobed. Corolla 5, rarely 4, funnel shaped twisted. Stamens 5, epipetalous with polyandrous, glandular disc is present. Ovary bicarpellary, free below are united by style above, superior, stigma lobed, dumbel shaped disc, style single, simple. Fruit a pair of follicles. Seeds linear, ribbed, villous, greyish brown hair at one end, endospermic.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark, leaf and flower- cardiogenic, diuretic. Leaf on cutaneous eruptions

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

KARJOORA

Botanical Name: *Phoenix dactylifera* L.

Family: Arecaceae

Kannada: Karjoora

Hindi: Khajoor

English: Date palm

Distribution: Occasionally growing in the gardens.

Description: Trees. Stem 10-20ft high. Leaves 7-8ft long; leaflets fascicled. Spathes 12-16" long, almost woody, scurfy, separating into 2 boat shaped valves; male flowers 0.25-0.35 " long. Dense; female smaller distant. Fruit in spadix, 3ft long, much compressed, golden - orange; fruit oblong - ellipsoid 1.25" long, orange yellow.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- laxative, expectorant, demulcent. Fruits for fever and respiratory diseases

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Muslims

KARNIKAARA

Botanical Name: *Pterospermum acerifolium* Willd

Family: Sterculiaceae

Kannada: Raajatharu

Hindi: Kanak champa

Distribution: Cultivated in gardens, doubtfully native.

Description: Large trees. Leaves elliptic oblong, cordate at base, toothed near apex, palmately ribbed, 18x13. Peduncle 1-3 flowered, pedicels 1-3cm long, bracteoles. Gynophore elongate. Stamens 15 in fascicles of 3 each, palmately lobed or lacinate, sepals woolly on outside to 11x1cm, staminal filaments in phalanges. Ovary 5-locular, ovules many in each locule, style entire, stigma grooved. Capsule woody, terete, loculicidal, seeds many winged.

Flowering and fruiting: March & June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- tonic, disinfectant; bark; leaf hairs- haemostatic. Flower for headache, infusion for indigestion, dehydration, blood in urine; bark for intestinal complaints, headache, pains; bark and flower applied to suppurating smallpox

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

KARPASHAA

Botanical Name: *Gossypium herbaceum* L.

Family: Malvaceae

Kannada: Hatthi

Hindi: Kapaas

English: Cotton

Distribution: Cultivated for commercial use

Description: A shrub or sometimes tree like. Leaves orbicular to ovate, cordate at base deeply 3 - 5 lobed. Flowers solitary, axillary often glandular at top. Epicalyx segments orbicular to ovate. Calyx cupular, corolla yellow with a purple tinge. Capsule ovoid, beaked, seeds often coherent.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: A powerful emmenagogue, used in physiological doses. Homeopathically, it corresponds to many reflex conditions, depending on disturbed uterine function and pregnancy. *Gossypium* will relieve tardy menses, especially with sensation that the flow is about to start and yet does not do so. Tall, bloodless patients, with nervous chills

Religious Importance: The cotton is used for spinning the sacred thread used by hindus

KASTURIKA

Botanical Name: *Abelmoschus moschatus* Medic.

Family: Malvaceae

Kannada: Kasturi bende

Hindi: Kasturi dana

Distribution: Found occasionally in deciduous forests of southern interior Karnataka.

Description: Erect herbs. Leaves suborbicular to 15cm across; 3-7 lobed, hastate-cordate at base; lobes triangular, to oblong, crenate dentate. Flowers usually in terminal racemes; epicalyx lobes linear, usually 10 appressed in fruit, to 1.5 cm long. Corolla yellow with purple centre. Capsule ovoid, densely bristly usually exceeding epicalyx.

Flowering and fruiting: August & December-June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Seed- stimulant, antispasmodic, stomachic, tonic, carminative, aphrodisiac; whole plant- febrifuge, expectorant. Seeds for treating intestinal problems, stomatitis, heart diseases, dyspepsia, urinary discharges, gonorrhoea; mucilage from leaves and roots to treat venereal diseases; infusion of flower is a contraceptive.

Religious Importance: Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja

KATHAKA

Botanical Name: *Strychnos potatorum* L.f.

Family: Loganiaceae

Kannada: Nirmali, chillada mara

Hindi: Nirmali

English: Clearing nut tree

Distribution: Commonly found in dry and scrub forests.

Description: Erect trees. Leaves elliptic, acute at both ends, with a pair of ribs above the basal 3. Inflorescence a cyme usually on old wood. Corolla tube longer than lobes. Ovary and style glabrous. Fruit 1-1.5cm wide.

Flowering and fruiting: September & June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Seed tonic, demulcent, stomachic, sedative, emetic. Root for internal injury; seed for dysentery and eye troubles.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

KENDUKA

Botanical Name: *Diospyros ebenum* Koenig.

Family: Ebenaceae

Kannada: Bale mara

Hindi: Ebans

English: Ebony

Distribution: Found in dry evergreen forests of Deccan and Western ghats.

Description: Trees with branches glabrous. Leaves oblong, acuminate at apex, acute or rounded at base 16x5.5cm, basal nerves oblique and opposite; reticulate prominent. Inflorescence in short axillary cymes, male flowers in short axillary cymes, 4-merous; calyx glabrescent with suborbicular lobes equalling the tube; corolla tubular white to 9mm, with oblong rounded lobes equal to tube. Stamens 35, very unequal. Flowers solitary; calyx much larger than in male, deeply divided. Staminodes 8. Ovary 8-celled, fruit subglobose, seated on aring at base of spreading calyx lobes, to 2x1.5cm; seeds 8, smooth.

Flowering and fruiting: February and August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- lithontriptic, astringent, attenuant.

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

KETHAKI

Botanical Name: *Pandanus fascicularis* Lam.

Family: Pandanaceae

Kannada: Kaedige

Hindi: Keor

English: Fragrant screw pine

Distribution: Found in all districts, especially near the coast.

Description: Shrub. Leaves simple narrow, acuminate sessile, base sheathing margins and keel beneath usually spinulose. Inflorescence capitate or spicate,

flowers sessile crowded; spathe flagellifereous, perianth absent stamens numerous. Staminodes 0. Ovules solitary drupe club shaped, nearly 2" long and 0.4" wide connate to just below the broadly convexly pyramidal apex; styles 0.8-1' wide.

Flowering and fruiting: August and October

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Spadix oil- stimulant, antispasmodic; leaf, anther. Leaf for leprosy, scabies, syphilis, skin diseases, for ailments of heart and brain; anther for diseases of blood

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja

KRUSHNAA

Botanical Name: *Piper longum* L.

Family: Piperaceae

Kannada: Hippali

Hindi: Pimpli

English: Long pepper

Distribution: Occasionally grown.

Description: Stem slender. Petiole hairy. Leaf blade membranous, 5-ribbed from base, ovate-acuminate, hairy, 16x6cm. Male spikes 10cm long. Fruiting spikes 18cm long. Peduncle with spreading hairs. Bracts glabrous, oblong with overlapping margins. Stigmas 3-4. Berry more or less ellipsoid.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root; fruit- tonic, aromatic, stomachic, carminative. Fruit and root for muscular pain, inflammation, drowsiness, obstructions of bile duct and gall bladder, fever, cold, cough

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

KRUTHAMAALA

Botanical Name: *Cassia fistula* L.

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Kakke

Hindi: Girimala

English: Indian laburnum

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests.

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaves to 40 cm long, eglandular; stipules linear, deciduous; leaflets 4-8 pairs, ovate, subacute, 16x8cm. Raceme to 40cm long; bracts deciduous. Antheriferous stamens 10, lower 2-3 larger, the rest subequal. Fruit indehiscent, cylindrical, to 60x2 cm.

Flowering and fruiting: February - April and May - December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- astringent, tonic; bark- antiviral; flower- antipyretic, purgative; fruit- cathartic, antibacterial; seed- carminative, appetizer. Root for skin diseases, leprosy, tuberculous glands, syphilis; leaf for skin diseases, heals ulcers, ringworms; flower cures biliousness; fruit applied on rheumatism, snakebite

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

KUNDHA

Botanical Name: *Jasminum multiflorum* (N.Burm.) Andr.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Kasthoorimallige

Hindi: Jangali chameli

English: Commn jasmine

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests of Western ghats.

Description: A scandent shrub some times erect; young parts velvety-tomentose. Leaves up to 7.5X4 cm, opposite, simple, ovate, acute at apex,

pubescent or tomentose; petioles 0.5 cm long. Flowers sessile, in dense terminal capitate cymes; bracts ovate-lanceolate. calyx densely hairy; lobes 5-7, subulate. corolla white; tube up to 2 cm long; lobes 6-9, oblong-lanceolate.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- antidote, leaf; flower- emetic. Leaf on indolent ulcers

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

KUNKUMA

Botanical Name: *Crocus sativus* L.

Family: Iridaceae

Kannada: Kesari

Hindi: Kesar

English: Safron

Distribution: Cultivated in the garden.

Description: Herb. Leaves dorsiventral, grooved on the back, radical, basal, linear or sword shaped, flat, equidistant, parallel-multicostate veined. Inflorescence solitary and terminal. Flowers bracteate, bisexual, lilac to deep purple in colour. Perianth 3 + 3, forms a long tube, segments equal. Stamens 3, epipetalous, free, included, inserted on the throat of the tube, flowers protandrous. Ovary 3-celled, syncarpous, inferior with axile placentation, many anatropous ovules, style long, stigmas 3 wedge shaped, lacerate. Fruit a small loculicidal capsule.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- stomachic, stimulant. Dried style apices and stigmas are employed for an enlarged liver, catarrh, melancholia, fevers and for snakebite; overdose is narcotic

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

KURUVAKA

Botanical Name: *Barleria prionitis* L.

Family: Acanthaceae

Kannada: Mullu goranti

Hindi: Vajradanthi

English: Thorny il dye

Distribution: Ocassiolly seen in all parts of the state, abundant in northern part of the state.

Description: Much branched prickly shrub. Leaves opposite, simple, elliptic, obovate, entire, acute. Flowers axillary, solitary, passing on to terminal spikes. Calyx 4, free to the base; outer pair larger than the inner, oblong- lanceolate. Corolla tubular, yellow, glabrous or slightly hairy outside, 4- lobed; lobes oblong- ovate, blunt. Stamens 2, fertile, staminodes 2. Ovary 2 celled, ovoid or oblong, ovules two in each cell; stigma bifid. Fruit an ovoid capsule; seeds 2, compressed, silky hairy.

Flowering and fruiting: October and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root placed on boils and glandular swellings; leaf for tooth ache and rheumatism; bark for dropsy.

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

KUTAJA

Botanical Name: *Holarrhena antidysenterica* sensu Hook.f., non(L.) Wall.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Kodamurike, hale

Hindi: Karchi

English: Conessi bark tree

Distribution: Found in all dry deciduous forests.

KURUVAKA

Botanical Name: *Raranea prismatis* L.

Family: Acanthaceae

Kannada: Mulle gerani

Hindi: Vajradanti

English: Thorny ill Joe

Distribution: Occasionally seen in all parts of the state, abundant in northern part of the state.

Description: Much branched prickly shrub. Leaves opposite, simple, elliptic, obtuse, entire, acute. Flowers axillary, solitary, passing on to terminal spikes. Calyx 4, free to the base; outer pair larger than the inner, oblong-lanceolate. Corolla tubular, yellow, glabrous or slightly hairy outside, 4-lobed; lobes oblong-ovate, blunt. Stamens 2, fertile, staminodes 2. Ovary 2 celled, ovoid or oblong, ovules two in each cell; stigma bifid. Fruit an ovoid capsule; seeds 2, compressed, silky hairy.

Flowering and fruiting: October and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root placed on boils and glandular swellings; leaf for tooth ache and rheumatism; bark for dropsy.

Religious Importance: Samavara vratha - pathra pooja, Samavara vratha - pushpa pooja

KUTAJA

Botanical Name: *Holarrhena antihysenterica* sensu Hook. f. & Th. (L.) Wall.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Kodumurike, hale

Hindi: Karchi

English: Conessi bark tree

Distribution: Found in all dry deciduous forests.

Description: Shrub upto 2m high. Leaves opposite, simple, ovate, oblong, glabrous 20x8cm. Flowers in axillary and terminal corymbose cymes, calyx deeply 5-lobed, corolla tubular, 20cm long, glabrous at base, stamens included at base of corolla tube. Ovary of two free carpels, ovules numerous, style short, fruit a pair of follicles.

Flowering and fruiting: February and January-November

Medicinal Properties & Uses: It is well known medicine for dysentery. Paste made from root-bark taken internally to contain dysentery, fever and in cleansing the intestine.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

LAVANGA

Botanical Name: *Syzygium aromaticum* (L.) Merr. et Perry

Family: Myrtaceae

Kannada: Lavanga

Hindi: Lavang

English: Clove

Distribution: It is native to the Molucca Islands and generally growing commercially in India

Description: The clove tree is an evergreen which grows to a height ranging from 10-20 m, having large oval leaves and crimson flowers in numerous groups of terminal clusters. The flower buds are at first of a pale color and gradually become green, after which they develop into a bright red, when they are ready for collecting. Cloves are harvested when 1.5-2 cm long, and consist of a long calyx, terminating in four spreading sepals, and four unopened petals which form a small ball in the centre.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Clove essential oil is used in aromatherapy and oil of cloves is widely used to treat toothache in dental emergencies.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

LIKUCHA

Botanical Name: *Artocarpus gomezianus* Wall ex Trecul

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Vaate gida

Hindi: Kathal

English: Lakoocha

Distribution: Occasionally found in semi-evergreen forests.

Description: Deciduous unarmed trees. Leaves entire, ovate-lanceolate, 25x12cm. Inflorescence cauliflorous or axillary. Flowers dioecious. Perianth in male 2-4 fid, stamen 1, pistillode absent. Fruit usually an echinate, large syncarp with fleshy perianths enclosing the seeds.

Flowering and fruiting: March and June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: The sour fruit is dried and used as a substitute for tamarind in curries. The sour fruit is dried and used as a substitute for tamarind in curries

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

MAACHI

Botanical Name: *Artemisia nilagirica* (C.B. Clarke) Pampan

Family: Asteraceae

Kannada: Kaadu manji pathre

Hindi: Nagdona

English: Felicon herb

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests of Shiradi ghats of Western ghats, often cultivated.

Description: Undershrubs to 3 m tall, profusely branched. Leaves deeply lobed, cuneate at base, with a pair of stipule like appendages; lobes entire. Heads usually

small, solitary or fascicled in racemes or panicles. Corolla tubular; in female shortly 2 dentate at tip, in bisexual floret 5 lobed. Florets white. Anthers usually sagitate below. Style arms truncate, fimbriate at tip. Achenes oblong, angled or not, sometimes striate, glabrous; pappus.

Flowering and fruiting: October and November

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- tonic, antispasmodic; leaf- spasmodic; flowering tops; fruit- anthelmintic; whole plant- emmenagogue, anthelmintic, antispasmodic, stomachic, antiseptic. Leaf and flowering tops for asthma, fever and diseases of brains

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

MAADHAVEE

Botanical Name: *Jasminum arborescens* Roxb.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Doddakaadu mallige

Hindi: Janglimongra

English: Tree jasmine

Distribution: Talacauvery, Ponnampet.

Description: Climbing shrubs. Leaves simple, broadly ovate, acute 4"x 3"opposite, rarely alternate. Flowers sweet scented in terminal or axillary corymbose cymes, rarely solitary; bracts linear, calyx tube funnel shaped or campanulate 0.25 " long corolla tube more or less elongate lobes 4- 10, stamens 2 usually inculded in corolla tube. Ovary 2- celled; ovules 2 in each cell, attached near the base, style filiform, fruit a didynamous berry or simple by the suppression of one carpel; carpel globose. Seeds in each carpel 1 rarely 2, erect.



Sacred Plants



Acacia catechu



Luvunga sarmentosa



Nymphaea nouchali

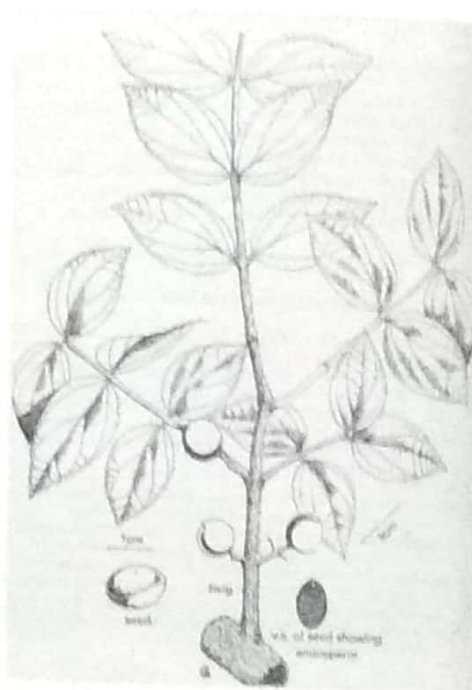


Limonia acidissima





Gossypium herbaceum



Strychnos potatorum





Diospyros ebenum



Pandanus fascicularis



Jasminum multiflorum



Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- emetic, stomachic, tonic; fruit- tonic. Leaf for bronchial obstructions

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

MAAGA

Botanical Name: *Areca catechu* L.

Family: Arecaceae

Kannada: Adike mara

Hindi: Supari

English: Betelnut, Areca nut

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: A graceful tree reaching to 100 ft. high. Leaves 4-6 ft. long, leaflets numerous, 1-2 ft. long the upper confluent. Spadix much branched. Spadices from the axils of fallen leaves below the crown, branched. Male flowers minute, numerous on the upper parts. Petals obliquely lanceolate, valvate. Female flowers much larger, few, at the bases of the branches. Perianth accrescent, segments orbicular, imbricate, the inner with acute, valvate tips. Ovary 1-celled, ovule single, basal, erect. Fruit ovoid or oblong. Seeds truncate at the base, albumen ruminant, embryo basilar.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Nuts-appetizer, digestive, cardi tonic, emmenagogue; tender fruits- laxative, aphrodisiac; bark-deobstruent. Treatment of diarrhoea, urinary disorders, skin diseases, ulcers, gynaecological disorders, diseases of nervous system, bronchial troubles, liver disorders

Religious Importance: Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

MAALATHI

Botanical Name: *Jasminum angustifolium* var. *angustifolium* (L.) Willd.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Kaadu mallige

Hindi: Banmallika

English: Wild jasmine

Distribution: Found in Deccan towards Eastern sides.

Description: Climbing shrubs. Leaves opposite, rarely alternate, simple trifoliate or imparipinnate. Flowers sweet scented in terminal or axillary corymbose cymes, rarely solitary; bracts linear, calyx tube funnel shaped or campanulate corolla tube more or less elongate lobes 4- 10, stamens 2 usually incuded in corolla tube connective produced. Ovary 2- celled; ovules 2 in each cell, attached near the base, style filiform, fruit a didynamous berry or simple by the suppression of one carpel; carpel globose. Seeds in each carpel 1 rarely 2, erect.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- emetic. Root on ringworm

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

MADHUCA

Botanical Name: *Madhuca longifolia* var. *latifolia* (L.) Macbride

Family: Sapotaceae

Kannada: Ippe, Hippe

Hindi: Mahua

English: Mahua tree

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests of Deccan and western ghats.

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaves crowded at apex, leaf blade 7-15 x 4-10 cm, usually acute at apex, rounded at base. Flowers pedicelled, 2-2.5 cm long, sepals ovate-lanceolate. Corolla white. Stamens 20 more. Berry globose often with oblique apex, ovoid, style 1.7 cm long.

Flowering and fruiting: January and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Seed oil emollient, laxative, emetic, galactagogue; bark astringent, emollient, tonic; root. Seed oil to treat skin diseases, rheumatism, headache, piles; bark to treat ulcers, itches, bleeding and spongy gums, diabetes, tonsillitis; root to promote healing ulcers.

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

MALLIKA

Botanical Name: *Jasminum officinale* L.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Aane mallige

Hindi: Chameli

English: Common jasmine

Distribution: Found in cultivated form.

Description: Climbing shrubs. Leaves imparipinnate opposite. Flowers sweet scented in terminal corymbose panicles, bracts linear, calyx lobes long and linear, corolla tube more or less elongate, white reddish beneath, stamens 2 usually included in corolla tube connective produced. Ovary 2-celled; ovules 2 in each cell, attached near the base, style filiform, fruit a didynamous berry or simple by the suppression of one carpel, carpel globose. Seeds in each carpel 1 rarely 2, erect.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaves used for corns, chewed for ulcers in mouth, an anthelmintic, diuretic, emmenagogue.

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankranti chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja.

Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja,
Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

MANDAARA

Botanical Name: *Bauhinia purpurea* L.

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Kanchivaal

Hindi: Lal kachnar

English: Purple mountain ebony

Distribution: Small tree grown as avenue tree in the cities.

Description: Trees. Leaflets oblong, obtuse or subacute at apex, connate about half way up and sometimes overlapping. Flowers purple or rose, petals all similar, appearing with the leaves. Calyx 5, petals 5, slightly unequal, usually clawed, Stamens 10 or reduced to 5 or 3 or even fertile, the rest sterile or wanting; filaments free, filiform; anthers versatile. Ovary stalked many ovuled; style short or filiform; stigma small or large and peltate, subterminal or oblique. Fruit a pod 6'-1ft long, 0.75-1' broad, flat.

Flowering and fruiting: March-May and April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark- antidote; flower. Bark for dropsy, scorpion bite, stomach tumour, convulsions, rheumatism; flower for indigestion

Religious Importance: Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

MARUGA

Botanical Name: *Origanum vulgare* L.

Family: Lamiaceae

Kannada: Maruga

Hindi: Sathra

Distribution: Cultivated

Description: Perennial, extremely golden foliage, and shimmering purple-pink flowers. Mound forming and aromatic bright yellow spring foliage intensifies to yellow-white in summer. Medium pink upright flowers on fine dark stems. Flowers are more purple than those of O. 'Aureum'.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf and flower top- carminative, stomachic, diuretic, diaphoretic. Leaf and flower top for bronchitis, whooping cough, toothache and rheumatism

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha = pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha = pathra pooja, Somavara vratha = pathra pooja, Swarnagouri vratha = pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha = pathra pooja

MARUVAKA

Botanical Name: *Origanum majorana* Willd

Family: Lamiaceae

English: Sweet marjoram

Distribution: It is native to North Africa, Turkey and SW Asia. It has naturalized in the Mediterranean region of southern Europe.

Description: It is a bushy half-hardy perennial sub-shrub that is often grown as an annual. *Origanum majorana* is 0.3-0.6 m tall with descending, multi-branched stems that spill over to create a mound. Since the stems take root where they touch the soil, the mound gradually increases in diameter. The leaves are soft and fuzzy, but you need a hand lens to see the short fine hairs. They are opposite each other on a square stem which is typical of plants in the mint Family. The leaves get up to an 2.5 cm long and have a wonderful, very distinctive, perfumy fragrance when bruised. The flowers are tiny, less than 0.3 cm long and arranged in burrlike heads 1.3 cm long.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Sankasta chaturthi vratha = pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha = patra pooja

NAARIKELA

Botanical Name: *Cocos nucifera* L.

Family: Arecaceae

Kannada: Tengu

Hindi: Narrel

English: Coconut

Distribution: Much cultivated, especially along the coasts.

Description: Tree. Stem tall, slender. Leaves pinnatisect, leaflets narrow. Spadices erect at first, later drooping, simply panicles, branches bearing scattered female flowers, often between 2 male, towards their bases and male only above. Spathes 2 or more, lower short, upper fusiform or clavate. Female flowers usually much larger, ovoid. Perianth greatly accrescent. Sepals 3, imbricate. Petals 3, shorter, convolute with imbricate tips. Ovary 3-celled, ovule 1 in each cell, style short, stigmas 3, recurved. Fruit large, ovoid, terete trigonous, 1 seeded, pericarp thick, fibrous, endocarp bony or stony with 3 basal pores. Seed cohering with the endocarp.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root, coconut water. Root for uterine diseases, bronchitis, liver complaints, dysentery; coconut water for fever, urinary complaints, checks vomiting

Religious Importance: Worshipped in all most all traditional poojas

NADYAAVANDA

Botanical Name: *Ervatamia heyneana* Cooke

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Bilikodasu, halmeti, maddarssa, nagarkuda

Distribution: Found in the forests of western ghats.

Description: A shrub reaching 6-8 ft in height, with white scented flowers. Leaves coriaceous, oblong or oblong-lanceolate, shortly acuminate, glabrous, base

acute, to 3-8X3 in, petiolate. Stem bark grey, rough. Flowers in pedunculate many flowered cymes, calyx coriaceous, glabrous, broadly oblong, obtuse, with membranous margins. Corolla inflated near the top. Ovary 2 celled, sometimes slightly coherent, ovules numerous in each carpel. Follicles twin with short beak which is often recurved. Seeds surrounded by red pulp.

Flowering and fruiting: March-April and July

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flowers used in inflammations of cornea. Roots employed as a local anodyne and chewed for relief from tooth-ache; also used as a vermicide

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

NAGAKESARA

Botanical Name: *Mesua ferrea* L.

Family: Clusiaceae

Kannada: Nagasampige, Nagakesara

Hindi: Nag-kesar

English: Mesua

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests of Mysore particularly Biligirirangan hills.

Description: Trees. Leaves opposite, petiolate, coriaceous. Flowers solitary or in pairs, sepals 4, petals 4 and white, stamens numerous, anthers 2-celled. Ovary bilocular, each with 2 basal ovules. Stigma peltate. Fruit a berry subtended by lignified sepals.

Flowering and fruiting: March and July

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Seeds yield a fatty oil used for skin troubles and as an embrocation in rheumatism and septic ulcers. Flowers used for cough, buds in dysentery and piles. Bark combined with ginger used as sudorific.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana

NAKHARANJINI

Botanical Name: *Lawsonia inermis* L.

Family: Lythraceae

Kannada: Madarangi

Hindi: Mehendi

English: Henna

Distribution: Found along stream and river banks in coastal and interior Karnataka, growing as hedge plant in northern Karnataka.

Description: Shrubs. Leaves elliptic-ovate, glabrous, attenuate at base, acute at apex, to 3x1.5cm. Pedicel articulated. Inflorescence a terminal-cymose panicle. Calyx lobes oblong, acute. Petals cream. Stamens 8, exserted, opposite to petals in pairs; anthers centifixed. Pistil globose, 2-4-locular; style curved. Capsule brown when ripe, 7mm across.

Flowering and fruiting: March and September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- antibacterial, flower- refrigerant; seed. Bark for jaundice, enlargement of spleen, skin diseases, leprosy; leaf for headache, muscular pain, for typhoid, haemorrhagaea; seed to cure weakness

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians and Muslims

NALA

Botanical Name: *Arundo donax* L.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Lalada kaddi

Hindi: Narkat

English: Great reed

Distribution: Found in most districts, except west coast, usually near water; up to 2000 ft.

Description: Tall stout, perennial shrubs, often woody below. Rhizome creeping. Culms fistular, reed-like, up to 10 ft. high. Leaves ensiform, amplexicaul, 8-24 in. long, 0.5-2 in. wide. Panicles large, decompound, branches fascicled, 9-24 in. long; spikelets laterally compressed, not jointed on the pedicels, 2-8-flowered; glumes 0.25-0.45 in. long; lemmas 2-4, the uppermost empty when more than 3, lowest 0.42-0.46 in. long, silky. Stamens 3. Style 2, free. Grain oblong.

Flowering and fruiting: November and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Rhizome- diuretic, emollient. Rhizome decoction used for stimulating menstrual discharge and diminishing milk secretion

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

NANDIVRIKSHA

Botanical name: *Tabernaemontana divaricata* Bedd.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Nandi batla

Hindi: Taggar

English: Moon beam

Distribution: Cultivated in gardens

Description: Shrub upto 2m high. Leaves opposite, simple 6x3cm. Flowers axillary or in few flowered cymes. Bracts small. Calyx tubular, 5 free, corolla salver shaped, tube cylindrical dilated at mouth, lobes 5, stamens 5. Ovary of 2 free carpels, stigma bifid. Fruit a follicle, seeds enclosed in red aril.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal properties and uses: Root- anodyne; stem- refrigerant; leaf. Root chewed to relieve toothache; leaf juice for treatment of eye diseases.

Religious Importance: Flowers used in all traditional poojas and plant growing near temple and houses.

NAVALLI

Botanical Name: *Piper betel* L.

Family: Piperaceae

Kannada: Veeleyadele

Hindi: Pan

English: Betel leaf

Distribution: Malayan creeper, cultivated extensively in Western districts.

Description: A perennial creeper. Leaves entire, often unequal-sided, stipules various. Flowers minute, dioecious, rarely hermaphrodite, each in the axil of a bract with or without lateral bracteoles, arranged in spikes often very closely congested and usually opposite the leaves. Perianth 0. Stamens 2-4, rarely more, filaments short. Ovary 1-celled, ovule solitary, style short or 0, stigmas 2-5. Fruit a small ovoid or globose 1-seeded berry. Seeds usually globose, testa thin, albumen floury, radicle superior.

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- weak narcotic, haemostatic, antiseptic. Leaf juice for eye complaints, stomach disorders, quenches thirst; fruit for cough

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja

NILOTPHALA

Botanical Name: *Nymphaea pubescens* Willd

Family: Nymphaeaceae

Kannada: Kannaaidile

English: White lotus

Distribution: Commonly found in open tanks.

Description: Perennial, stoloniferous, aquatic herbs. Leaf blade entire to bluntly toothed, green above, pale-purple and glabrous below, 10-25x8-20cm. Petals pink to white. Connectives hooded over anthers, hardly exceeding them.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- cardiotonic, astringent. Root for dysentery and diarrhoea

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

NIMBA

Botanical Name: *Azadirachta indica* A.Juss.

Family: Meliaceae

Kannada: Baevina mara

Hindi: Nimb

English: Neem tree

Distribution: Deciduous tree found in drier parts.

Description: Evergreen tree to 15m. Leaflets 12-16, 4-6x1-1.5cm. Ovate-lanceolate, acuminate cuneate and unilaterally resected on one side, cuneate-serrate. Flowers elongate, 5- merous, sepals 5, free; petals obovate, white. Anthers slightly exserted. Ovary globose; style elongate, cylindrical; stigma 3- lobed. Fruit a pulpy drupe, cylindric, 1 locular, 1- seeded; seeds exarillate.

Flowering and fruiting: Janaury and July

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant tonic, antiperiodic; stem- astringent, stimulant; leaf- antihelminthic, antiseptic; flower- stomachic; seed & fruit- purgative, antiseptic, emollient. Root for skin diseases; stem for cholera, jaundice; leaf for heart diseases, tuberculosis, measles. Small pox; fruit & seed for leprosy, piles, urinary diseases

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Nandana vana

NIMBA

Botanical Name: *Citrus aurantifolia* (Christm.) Swingle

Family: Rutaceae

Kannada: Herali kaayi

Hindi: Bara-nimbu

English: Bitter orange

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Evergreen shrubs or small trees, usually armed with spines. Leaves alternate, 1-foliate, coriaceous, petiole often winged, leaflets entire or crenulate. Flowers axillary, solitary fascicled or in small cymes. Calyx cupular or urceolate, 3-5 lobed. Petals 4-8, linear-oblong, thick, imbricate. Disk large, cupular or annular. Stamens numerous, inserted round the disk. Ovary many-celled, style stout, deciduous, stigma capitate, ovules 4-8 in each cell, 2-seriate. Fruit a large berry, oblong or globose, fleshy, many celled.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- antiscorbutic, carminative, stomachic. Fruit used in treatment of diarrhoea, dysentery, scurvy, rheumatism

Religious Importance: Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja

NITYAKALYANI

Botanical name: *Catharanthus roseus* (L.) GDon

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Sadha pushpa

Hindi: Sadabahar

English: Periwinkle

Distribution: Cultivated and naturalized in Devalkere.

Description: Erect annual or perennial herbs. Leaves elliptic to obovate, 3-8 cm long, pubescent; base acute; apex obtuse or rounded, cuspidate. Cymes 1- 4

flowered. Corolla mostly rose but sometimes with other colour combinations; tube 2.5- 3 mm long, pubescent outside, pilose within except at the level of the lobes; lobes broadly ovate, 15-25 mm long. Stigma cylindric with a pendent basal colar, pubescent; ovaries separate, pubescent; nectary of 2 erect glands. Follicles thickened, pubescent, 2 3 mm long.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal properties and uses: Root- anticancerous, purgative, hypoglycemic, carcinostatic; whole plant, leaf. Whole plant for diabetes, bronchitis, cough, cold; leaf for diabetes, wasp sting.

Religious Importance: Flowers used in all traditional poojas and plant growing near temples and houses.

LOUDUMBARA

Botanical Name: *Ficus racemosa* L.

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Atthi hannu

Hindi: Gular

English: Cluster fig

Distribution: Found in semi-evergreen and dry deciduous forests.

Description: Small or large trees with few or, short aerial roots. Leaf blade elliptic-lanceolate, obtuse or acute at apex and base, to 12x5cm, chartaceous, glabrous, triplinerved; lateral nerves 5-6 pairs. Figs on short, warted, tubercled, leafless branchlets, peduncled, obovoid, pubescent, 2cm across, reddish when ripened; peduncle 1cm long; bracts lateral at the middle of the peduncle, small.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit for dysentery, diabetes; leaf for biliousness, remedy for diarrhoea, piles; fruit for haemoptysis, monorrhagia

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Navagraha vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja

PAACHEE

Botanical Name: *Pogostemon heyneanus* Benth.

Family: Lamiaceae

Kannada: Pachhe thene

Hindi: Pacholi

Distribution: Found in Western ghats towards southwards, in open forest land, often cultivated and then run wild.

Description: A tall herb with white flowers speckled with red points. Leaves in usually equal pairs, membranous, glabrescent, ovate, acute or obtuse, simply or doubly crenate-serrate, cuneate at base, upto 4 in. long 3 in broad. Flowers in clusters not one sided, globose, small, single or in pairs with floral leaves. Calyx more or less tubular, equally 5-lobed, the tube keeled within, often enlarged in fruit. Corolla tube included or exserted, 2-lipped, the upper lip 3-lobed. Stamens 4, filaments usually bearded. Ovary 4-partite, style slender, 2-fid with slender stigmatic lobes. Fruit of 4 smooth, ovoid or ellipsoid, dry nutlets, one face often angled.

Flowering and fruiting: December and March

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Whole plant- diuretic, carminative. Leaf for cough and asthma, root for dropsy

Religious Importance: Used in Gopooja to decorate cow.

PAATALI OR PAADARI

Botanical Name: *Stereospermum chelonoides* Clarke

Family: Bignoniaceae

Kannada: Bili paadri

Hindi: Padaria

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests of Deccan and Western ghats.

Description: A deciduous tree. Leaves opposite, simply pinnate, leaflets 3-4 pairs and odd one, broadly elliptic, usually acuminate, often serrulate, rough above.

pubescent beneath, base usually rounded and unequal-sided. Young parts viscous-hairy. Flowers sweetly fragrant, in large lax trichotomous viscidly-hairy panicles. Calyx campanulate, viscidly hairy, lobes 3-5, short, broad. Corolla infundibuliform, dull purple, pubescent outside, bearded inside on the lower, glabrous on the upper side. Ovary elongate, 2-celled, ovules many, 2-seriate in each cell, horizontal. Capsule 1-2 ft, straight, cylindric, slightly ribbed, somewhat rough with elevated whitish specks. Seeds with long membranous wing at each end.

Flowering and fruiting: October and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Stem- tonic, diuretic. Root for intermittent and puerperal fevers; stem for stomach ache, cholera, liver troubles

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Raashi vana Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

PADMA

Botanical Name: *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.

Family: Nelumbonaceae

Kannada: Kamala, Thaavare

Hindi: Ambuj, Kamal

English: Lotus

Distribution: Found in open tanks in most of the regions.

Description: Aquatic, perennial, stoloniferous herbs. Petiole upto 2m long, leaf blade circular, waxy, glaucous beneath, upto 60cm across. Peduncle 2m. Flowers 25cm across. Outer tepals greenish-white. Inner tepals rosy-white. Receptacle 5-8cm across, fleshy.

Flowering and fruiting: May and November

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Tuber; rhizome, carpel- demulcent; flower- astringent, cooling agent for cholera. Tuber to relieve stangulation in intestines, rhizome yields nutritious 'arrowroot' useful for diarrhoea and dysentery in children

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

PALAASHA

Botanical Name: *Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Mutthugada mara

Hindi: Palas

English: Flame of the forest

Distribution: Found in all dry and open deciduous forests.

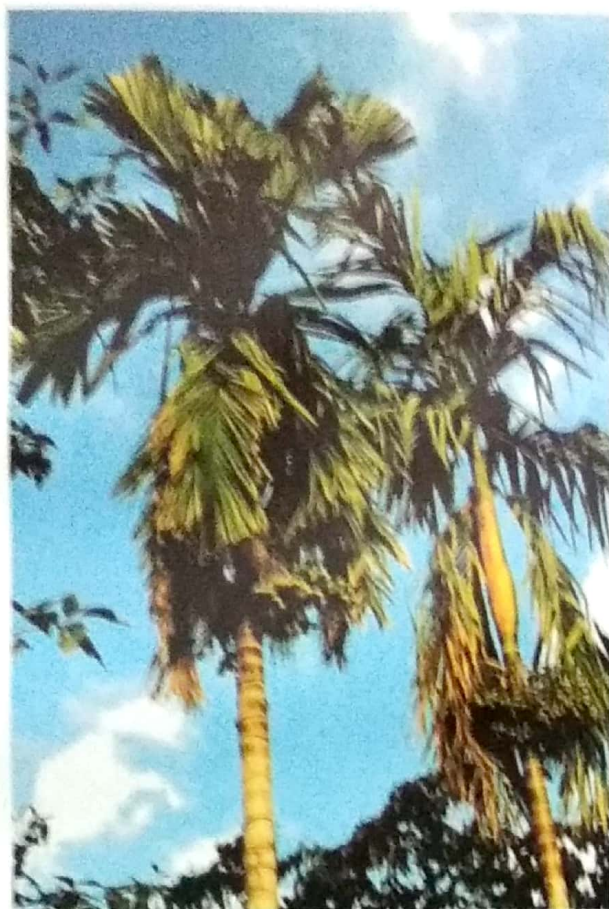
Description: Deciduous trees to 8m. Leaf rachis 15-20 cm; leaflets rhomboid or broadly ovate, obtuse or retuse, to 18x20cm; nerves raised beneath. Racemes 8-12 cm long. Flowers showy Flame -coloured, 6cm long. Calyx dark brown tomentose; lowest calyx tooth slightly shorter than laterals. Petals tomentose outside. Pod distinctly stalked, rounded at apex 17x6cm.

Flowering and fruiting: October and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark- appetizer, ahrodisiac, laxative; Gum- astringent, stimulant; leaf- astringent, aphrodisiac, tonic; flower- diuretic, astringent, depurative; seed- contraceptive. Root for blood pressure, night blindness, elephantiasis; gum for dysentery, diarrhoea; leaf for eye disease, on swellings and boils; seed for snakebite, roundworms and tapeworms; lye for enlarged spleen

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Navagraha vana, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Raashi vana

Sacred Plants



Areca catechu



Jasminum officinale



Madhuca longifolia var. *latifolia*



Origanum vulgare



Bauhinia purpurea



Cocos nucifera



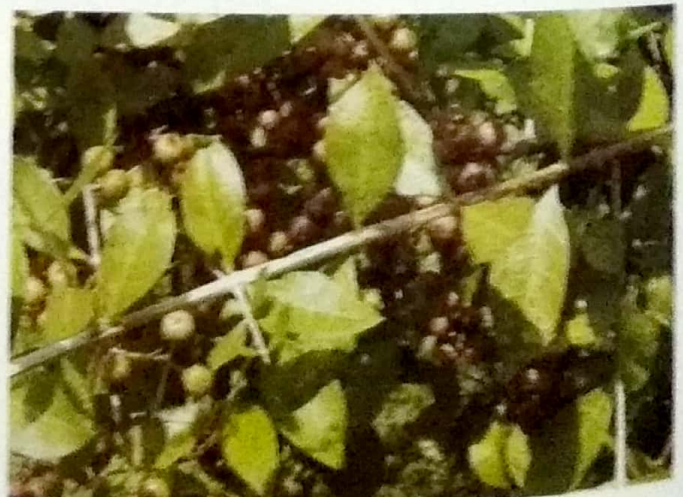
Origanum majorana



Ervatamia heyneana



Mesua ferrea



Lawsonia inermis

Sacred Plants



Tabernaemontana divaricata



Piper betel



Nymphaea pubescens



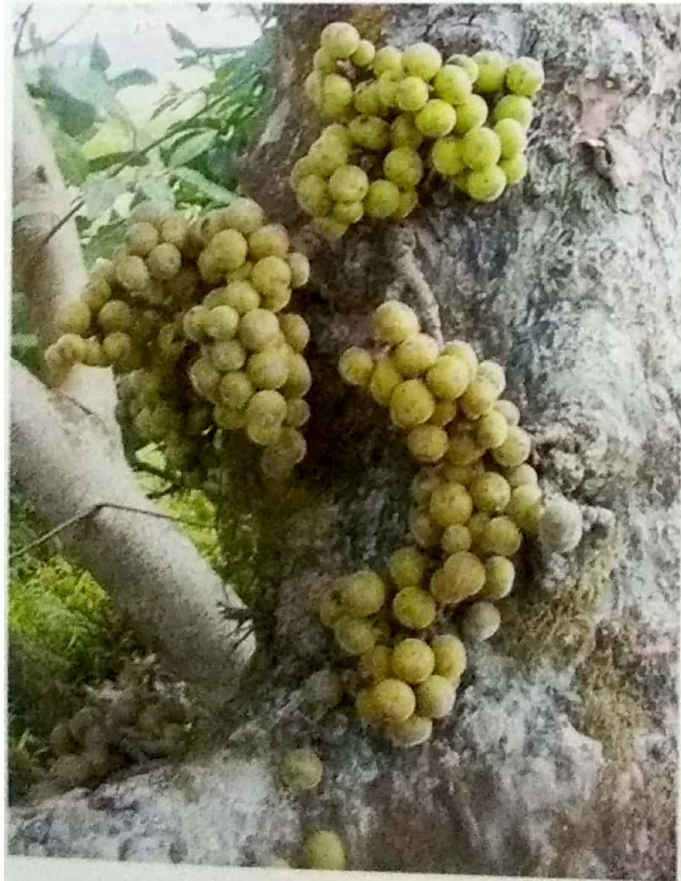
Arundo donax



Citrus aurantifolia



Catharanthus roseus



Ficus racemosa



Azadirachta indica

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaves crowded at apex, leaf blade 7-15x5-10cm, usually acute at apex, rounded at base. Flowers pedicelled, 2-2.8cm long sepals ovate - lanceolate. Corolla white. Stamens 20-more. Berry globose often with oblique apex, ovoid, style 1.7cm long.

Flowering and fruiting: January and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Seed oil- emollient, laxative, emetic, galactagogue; bark- astringent, emollient, tonic; root. Seed oil to treat skin diseases, rheumatism, headache, piles; bark to treat ulcers, itches, bleeding and spongy gums, diabetes, tonsillitis; root to promote healing ulcers

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

MALLIKA

Botanical Name: *Jasminum officinale* L.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Aane mallige

Hindi: Chameli

English: Common jasmine

Distribution: Found in cultivated form.

Description: Climbing shrubs. Leaves imparipinnate opposite. Flowers sweet scented in terminal corymbose panicles, bracts linear, calyx lobes long and linear, corolla tube more or less elongate, white reddish beneath, stamens 2 usually included in corolla tube connective produced. Ovary 2- celled; ovules 2 in each cell, attached near the base, style filiform, fruit a didynamous berry or simple by the suppression of one carpel; carpel globose. Seeds in each carpel 1 rarely 2, erect.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaves used for corns, chewed for ulcers in mouth, an anthelmintic, diuretic, emmenagogue.

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja,

PANASA

Botanical Name: *Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam.

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Halasina mara

Hindi: Kanthal

English: Jack fruit tree

Distribution: Evergreen tree found in high and moderate rainfall areas.

Description: Large glabrous trees. Stipules often to 8cm, leaving and annular scar behind. Leaves to 12x7.5cm, entire oblong. Short petioled, simple, entire or pinnatifid, penninerved. Inflorescence cauliflorous or axillary, pedunculate, globose or ellipsoid, sometimes tubular and bilobed, usually hairy; in female tubular, sunk in the Inflorescence axis. Stamens 1; pistillode 0. Stigma single. Fruit an echinate, large syncarp with the fleshy(edible) perianths enclosing the seeds.

Flowering and fruiting: December and June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- anthelmintic, Seed- diuretic, aphrodisiac; unripe fruits- astringent, carminative, tonic, acrid; ripe fruits- laxative. Roots- treating diarrhoea; leaves for skin diseases, ulcers, small pox, carbuncles; flower- during childbirth to clear foetus

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Raashi vana

PARIJAATHA

Botanical Name: *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis* L.

Family: Oleaceae

Kannada: Paarijaatha

Hindi: Harsingar

English: Night jasmine, coral jasmine

Distribution: Found in dry forests, and also grown near temples and houses for its fragrant flowers.

Description: Shrubs to small trees. Leaves opposite, ovate, entire or toothed. Flowers in small sessile bracteate heads disposed in terminal trichotomous cymes. Calyx ovoid-cylindric, sub-truncate, finally splitting or deciduous. Corolla salver-shaped, tube cylindric, orange, lobes 4-8, contorted in bud, spreading, white. Stamens 2, subsessile near the top of the corolla-tube. Ovary 2-celled, ovule 1 in each cell, erect, basal, style cylindric, stigma shortly bifid. Fruit an orbicular, Capsule, compressed parallel to the septum, separating when ripe into 2 1-seeded cells. Seed erect, flattened, testa thin.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root; bark; leaf- anthelmintic, ferbrifuge; inflorescence and fruit, seed. Root for trophy, emaciation; bark for controlling discharge during pregnancy, menorrhagia, dysentery, ulcer of palate, internal injuries; leaf for sciatica; inflorescence and fruit for cough; seed to cure scales on scalp

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja

PLAKSHA

Botanical Name: *Ficus virens* Aiton

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Basarigoli

English: White fig

Distribution: Found in plains and upper ghats.

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaf blade ovate - lanceolate, abruptly obtusely acuminate, rounded or truncate at base, to 12x6cm, slightly glossy, with 3-5 basal nerves and 6-8 pairs of lateral primary nerves. Figs in axillary pairs, shortly peduncled, globular, glabular, 0.6- 1cm across, creamy white; peduncle to 0.3cm long; basal bracts distinct.

Flowering and fruiting: December and June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark used as gargle in salivation, as an injection for leucorrhoea and as a wash for ulcers

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

PRIYAALU

Botanical Name: *Buchanania lanzan* Spr.

Family: Anacardiaceae

Kannada: Mukari mara, Chirupuli

Hindi: Char

English: Cuddappa almond.

Distribution: Deciduous tree found in dry and evergreen forests.

Description: Trees. Leaves alternate, petioled, broadly oblong, obtuse or emarginate, over 6" long and 2" broad. Petiole stout, main nerves straight and parallel. Flowers 0.3 " in diam, the petals oblong; calyx 5- toothed, corolla 5-toothed. Stamens 8-10. Ovary with 5 carpels. Fruit a small slightly lenticular drupe stone crustaceous or bony 2- valved. Seeds gibbous acute at one end; albumen 0; cotyledons thick; radicle superior.

Flowering and fruiting: December-March and June-July

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root used for venereal diseases. Stem bark pounded and applied on inflammation of gum, for sunstroke, snake bite. Leaf tips fried with other herbs, powdered and applied on burns. Root bark used in a preparation for asthma. Seed used for skin diseases. Gum used for diarrhea.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

PUNNAAGA

Botanical Name: *Calophyllum inophyllum* L.

Family: Clusiaceae

Kannada: Kalhonne

Hindi: Sultan champa

English: Common poon

Distribution: Common along the coast in Dakshina and Uttara Kannada

Description: Semi-evergreen trees upto 10m height. Leaves coriaceous, broadly elliptic-oblong, rounded at base, to 15x10cm, petiole to 2cm long. Inflorescence a axillary raceme to 15cm long, pedicel 3.2cm long. Petals 4 orbicular, white. Drupe globose, 3cm across, yellow with age.

Flowering and fruiting: November & April and March April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant-purgative, emetic; seed; bark-astringent. Bark for internal haemorrhage; seed for rheumatism and various skin diseases, gonorrhoea, gout, gleet

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Ashoka vana, Nrusingha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Nrusingha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

RAKTACHANDANA

Botanical Name: *Pterocarpus santalinus* L.f.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Raktha chandana

Hindi: Laalchandan

English: Red sanders

Distribution: Rarely found in dry forests of Western ghats.

Description: A small tree, attains a height of 7.5 m. It has an extremely hard, dark purple heartwood. Leaflets 3, rarely 4 or 5, broad, elliptic, obtuse, the length is 3.8-7.5 cm. Flowers are few, in short axillary or terminal racemes. Pod, oblique and gradually narrowed into a short stalk, measures 3.8 cm in diameter.

Flowering and fruiting: May and September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Heartwood- astringent, diaphoretic, tonic, cooling; fruit. Heartwood applied for headache and inflammation; fruit for dysentery

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Raashi vana

RASAALA

Botanical Name: *Saccharum officinarum* L.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Kabbu

Hindi: Ganna

English: Sugar cane

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Erect perennial herbs. Leaves narrow, flat, upto 5 ft. long and 2 in broad, culms up to 2 ft. high. Panicles up to 3 ft. long, densely silvery, glumes uniform, whitish through. Style 2, free or shortly connate. Grain oblong to subglobose.

Flowering : Janaury

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- diuretic, demulcent, coolant; stem- aphrodisiac, diuretic, laxative, coolant.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

RATHNA GANDHI

Botanical name: *Delonix elata* Gamble

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Sankeshvara

Hindi: Gutthura

English: White gul mohur

Distribution: Cultivated near temples and planted, often run wild in Deccan plains

Description: Medium sized tree. Leaves abruptly bipinnate; leaflets many, small; stipules small. Flowers large, showy, in terminal corymbs; bracts small, caducous. Calyx-tube very short; lobes 5, valvate, subequal. Petals 5, orbicular, imbricate, clawed, sub-equal or the uppermost dissimilar. Stamens 10, free. Ovary

subsessile, many-ovuled; style filiform; stigma truncate, ciliolate. Pod elongate, flat, woody, dehiscent. Seeds transverse, oblong.

Flowering and fruiting: September and December

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Leaf to alleviate flatulence, rheumatism

Religious Importance: Cultivated near temples.

ROHINI

Botanical Name: *Soymida febrifuga* (Roxb.) A.Juss.

Family: Meliaceae

Kannada: Swamy mara

Hindi: Rohan

English: Febrifuge mahogany

Distribution: Found in dry and scrub forests.

Description: Trees to 20m. Leaf rachis to 25cm long; leaflets 8-10; ovate or obovate, obtuse at apex, coriaceous to 10x6cm. Panicle equalling the leaves. Calyx lobes ovate, sparsely pubescent. Petals obovate, 0.5cm long, slightly fimbriate towards base. Ovary glabrous. Capsule obovoid, 7cm long; seeds oblong, flattened.

Flowering and fruiting: February and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark- general tonic. Bark for diarrhoea, cold, fever, decoction for gargle, vaginal infections, rheumatic swellings

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

SAALA

Botanical Name: *Shorea robusta* Gaertn.

Family: Dipterocarpaceae

Kannada: Raalada mara

Hindi: Saal

English: Common saul

Distribution: Cultivated.

Description: Trees of medium to very large trees. Petals free, oblong-lanceolate, contorted. Ovary globose, hairy. Accrescent calyx lobes oblong, erect, 8-10 nerved, turning red, 9x1.8cm.

Flowering and fruiting: February and March

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Stem; resin- astringent; bark; fruit; flower. Stem for ophthalmia; resin for tumours, diarrhoea; bark for cholera, burning sensation in chest, smallpox, carbuncle; flower for syphilis; fruit for cancer of face

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

SALAKI

Botanical Name: *Boswellia serrata* Roxb. ex Colebr.

Family: Burseraceae

Kannada: Saabrani

Hindi: Salai

English: Indian frankincense

Distribution: Found in deciduous forests of Deccans, occasionally found in dry forests of Western ghats.

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaf rachis to 25 cm long; leaflets 19-23, oblong - lanceolate, obtuse, glabrous, chartaceous, usually entire, to 9x2.5cm. Inflorescence to 12cm long. Petals white, pubescent outside. Drupe to 2x1.1cm.

Flowering and fruiting: March and September

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Gum diuretic, stimulant, astringent diaphoretic, ecboic, emmenagogue; bark useful in the treatment of ulcer, tumour, goitre, piles and skin diseases; bark in diarrhoea, piles, cough, skin diseases, eye inflammations, headache; seed for cold.

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Hindus.

SAMIRA

Botanical Name: *Prosopis spicigera* L.

Family: Fabaceae - Mimosoidea

Kannada: Banni

Hindi: Chinkur

English: Indian mesquit

Distribution: Found in dry stony lands and on black cotton soil, in open forest, more rarely in thicker forest of Deccan.

Description: Armed trees. Branches with scattered spines. Petioles 1.8cm; pinnae 2 pairs, 3.5cm long; leaflets 8-12 pairs, broadly oblong, subacute, 1.3 x 0.5 cm. Raceme 6-10 cm long; petals glabrous. Pod straight or curved, glabrous, moniliform.

Flowering and fruiting: November and April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant over the skin as a defilatory; bark to cure rheumatism; flower to guard against miscarriage

Religious Importance: In northern part of Karnataka this plant is used instead of *Acacia ferruginea* (Shami)

SAPTHAPARNI

Botanical Name: *Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R.Br.

Family: Apocynaceae

Kannada: Maddale

Hindi: Saptaparni

English: Devil tree

Distribution: Found in evergreen and deciduous forests of Western ghats and Deccan forests.

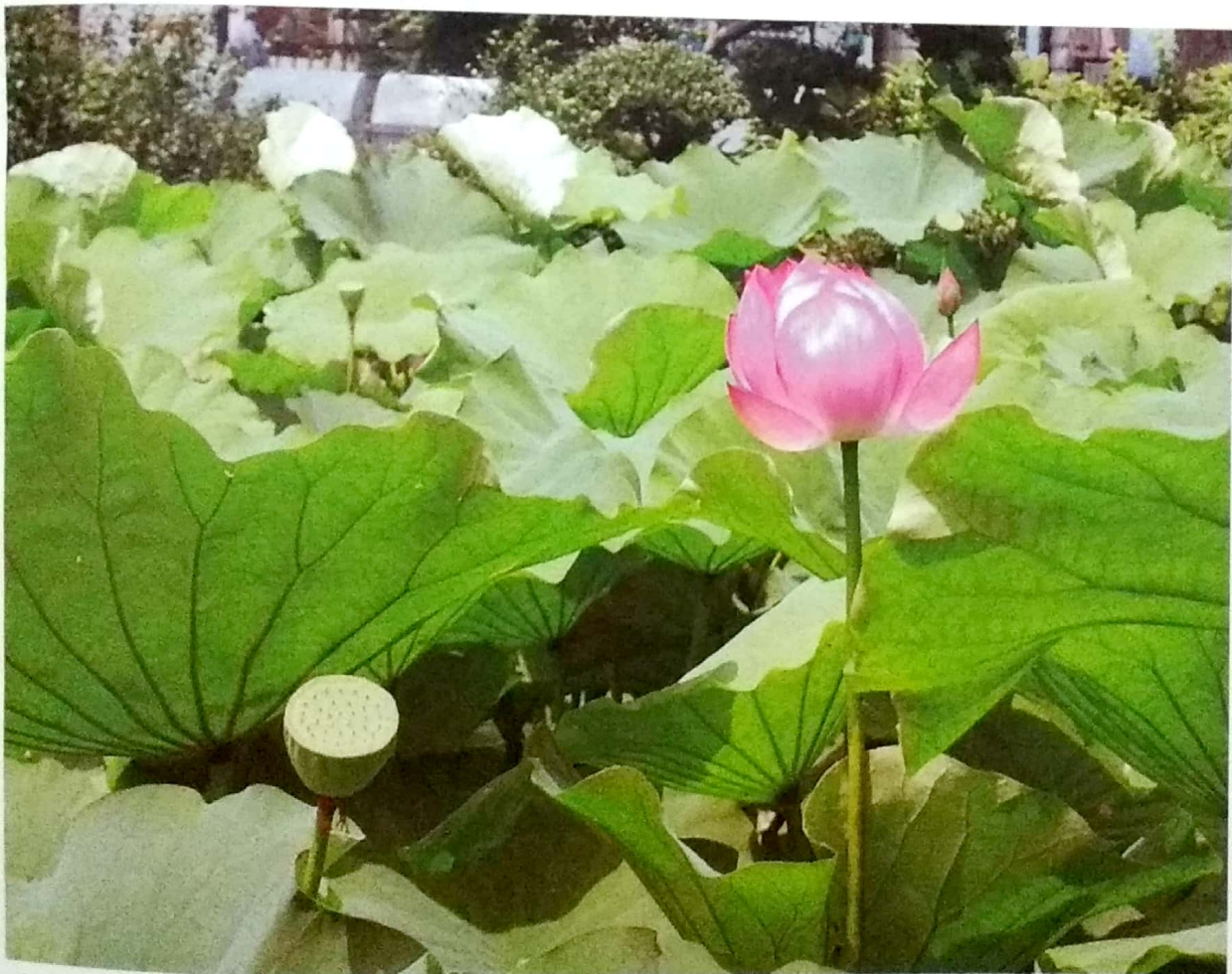
Sacred Plants



Pogostemon heyneanus



Butea monosperma



Nelumbo nucifera



Artocarpus heterophyllus



Nyctanthes arbor-tristis



Ficus virens



Buchnanania lanzan

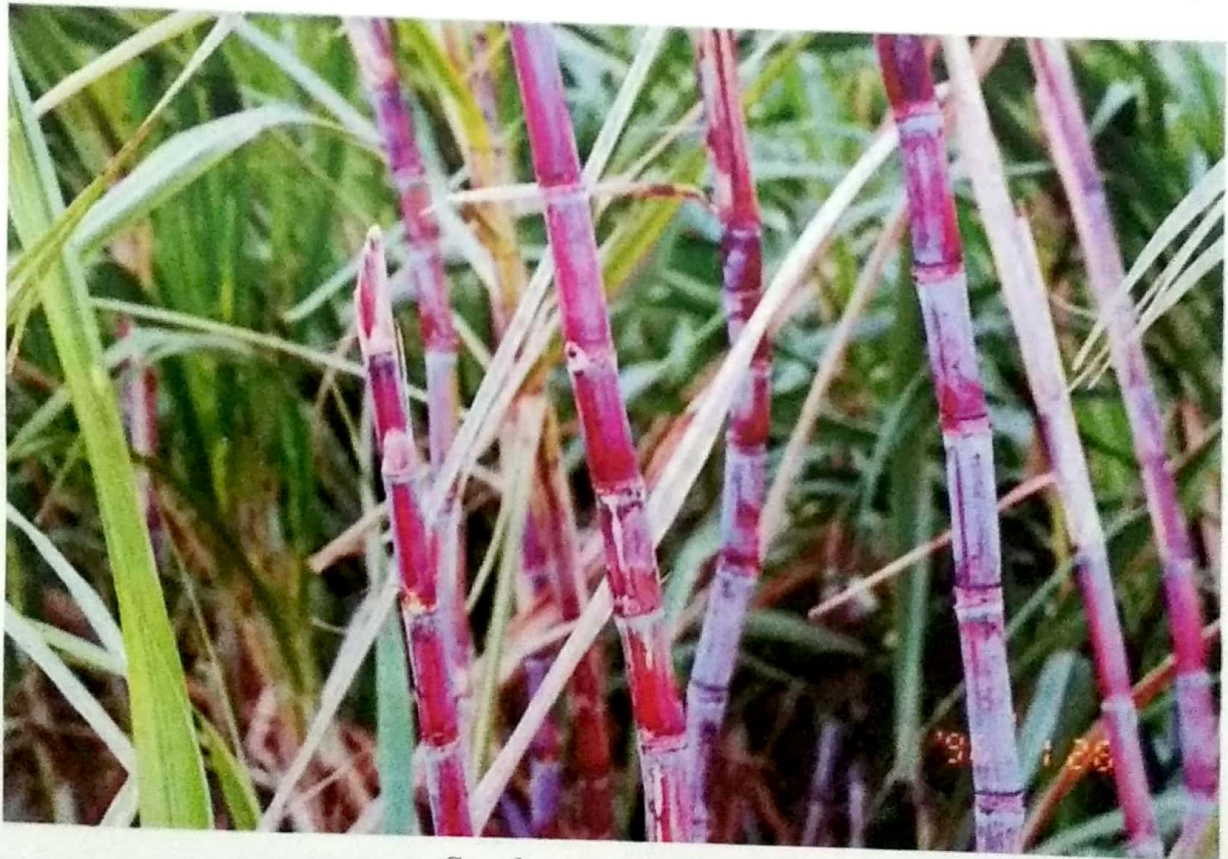
Sacred Plants



Calophyllum inophyllum



Pterocarpus santalinus



Saccharum officinarum



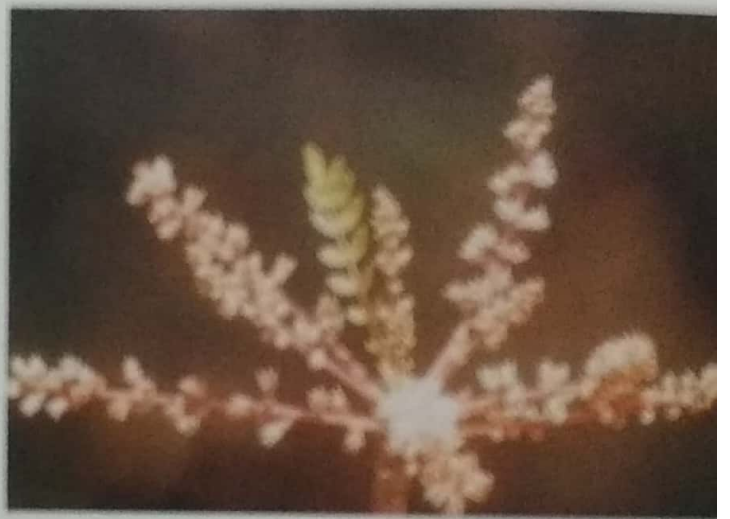
Delonix elata



Soymida febrifuga



Shorea robusta



Boswellia serrata



Prosopis spicijera



Alstonia scholaris

Description: A large tree, often buttressed; branches whorled. Leaves 4-7 in a whorl, up to 20X6 cm, obovate, elliptic-oblong or oblanceolate, glabrous, obtuse or emarginate at apex, narrowed into a short petiole at the base. Flowers sessile or very shortly pedicelled, with unpleasant smell, in many-flowered pubescent peduncled and branched umbellate cymes. Corolla greenish-white; tube 8 mm long; lobes ovate-obtuse. Disc 0. Follicles pendulous, 30 - 60 cm long, cylindrical.

Flowering and fruiting: December and March

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaves - Aqueous extract significantly antimicrobial Vs Myco.tuberculosis. Echitamine - Not a protoplasmic poison and does not kill amoebae or reduce motility even after 2 hours exposure to 1 % solution. Bark — Alcoholic extract showed anticancer activity

Religious Importance: Raashi vana

SARALA

Botanical Name: *Pinus roxburghii* Sargent

Family: Pinaceae

Kannada: Daevadaaru

Hindi: Chir

English: Chir pine, Indian long leaf pine

Distribution: Native to Himalaya, cultivated

Description: Decorative graceful tree when young, with long, drooping foliage, later broad, with round top, to 50 m high in habitat; arching needles in bundles of three, shining green, to 30 cm long; Ovoid cones to 18 cm, the scales reflexed.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Resin- stimulant, expectorant. Resin for rheumatism, bronchitis, haemorrhage, flatulence

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana, Nandana vana

SARJU

Botanical Name: *Canarium strictum* Roxb.

Family: Burseraceae

Kannada: Raaladhoopa

Hindi: Kala damer

English: Black dammer tree

Distribution: Occasionally found in moist deciduous forests of Western ghats.

Description: Evergreen tall tree. Leaves alternate exstipitate, leaflets entire serrate. Flowers bisexual, 3-merous. Calyx 3, lobed nearly covering the corolla in female. Petals 3, free imbricate. Stamens twice the number of petals. Ovary superior, trilocular, drupe with abortive unilocular, 1 seeded putamen.

Flowering and fruiting: March and August

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Stem mixed with gingili oil for pain of rheumatism; to treat chronic skin diseases.

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

SEVANTHIKA

Botanical Name: *Chrysanthemum indicum* L.

Family: Asteraceae

Kannada: Shavanthige

Hindi: Guladaavudi

Distribution: Native of China and Japan, are largely grown.

Description: Perennial with branching slender more or less lopping stems 2-3 ft. long, herbage gray-pubescent. Leaves thin, ovate in outline, most of those on the stems not exceeding 3 in. long, parted nearly to midrib, the small teeth acute or mucronate. Heads many in small clusters, on short peduncles, the disk usually not exceeding 0.5 in. across and often much less, the yellow rays not equalling the

disk, outer involucre bracts broadly scarious, the midnerve being green and herbaceous. Ovary 1-celled; ovule solitary, erect anatropous; style slender, normally 2-fid, the arms linear semi-terete, naked or pubescent, or tipped by pubescent cones, margins stigmatic. Fruit a dry indehiscent achene. Seed erect.

Flowering: November

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- aperient, stomachic. Whole plant for gonorrhoea

Religious Importance: Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

SHAMI

Botanical Name: *Acacia ferruginea* DC.

Family: Fabaceae-Mimosoideae

Kannada: Banni

English: Anasandra bark tree

Distribution: Found in dry forests, to the Eastern slopes of the Western ghats.

Description: Deciduous trees to 10 m. Branchlets armed with prickles. Leaves 8 cm long; stipular spines 0.5 cm; rachis with gland between the upper pinnae; petiole gland above the middle; pinnae 4-6 pairs, 6 cm long; leaflets 14-20 pairs, glabrous, glaucous, 8x2.5 mm. Spike 14 cm long, corolla white glabrous, 2-3 times as long as calyx. Pod strap shaped, flat, apiculate 3-6 seeded, 11x2.5 cm.

Flowering and fruiting: February and June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf, pod, bark, fruits; astringent, styptic, tonic, demulcent, emollient, aphrodisiac. Used to cure itching, leucoderma, ulcers, stomatis, blood diseases, diarrhoea, dysentery, gonorrhoea, giddiness, piles, worm infestation, haemorrhage, to enrich the blood.

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana, Navagraha vana, Raashi vana, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

SHATHAPATHRA

Botanical Name: *Nymphaea pubescens* Willd

Family: Nymphaeaceae

Kannada: Kannaaidile

Hindi: Kumud

English: White lotus

Distribution: Commonly found in open tanks.

Description: Perennial, stoloniferous, aquatic herbs. Leaf blade entire to bluntly toothed, green above, pale-purple and glabrous below, 10-25x8-20cm. Petals pink to white. Connectives hooded over anthers, hardly exceeding them.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- cardiotonic, astringent. Root for dysentery and diarrhoea

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja, Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

SHIMSHUPA

Botanical Name: *Dalbergia latifolia* Roxb.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Beete mara

Hindi: Kala-sisham

English: Indian rose wood

Distribution: Commonly found in Deccan forests, and in dry forests of Western ghats.

Description: Deciduous trees to 8m. Leaves 20-25 cm; rachis glabrous; leaflets 7-9, elliptic-orbicular, rounded or emarginate, cuneate at base, glabrous, sub-coriaceous, to 5x4cm. Calyx glabrous. Corolla creamy white. Stamens 9, monadelphous. Pod oblong, narrowed at both ends, slightly thickened, glabrous, 1-4 seeded, 8x1.5cm.

Flowering and fruiting: August and October

Medicinal Properties & Uses: The plant considered bitter, tonic and stomachic, and is used to treat dyspepsia, diarrhoea, leprosy, obesity and worms. The bark, pounded with that of *Dalbergia paniculata*, is applied externally to relieve body pain. In Ayurvedic practice, the root, bark and leaves are used as substitutes for those of *Dalbergia sissoo* to treat polyuria, chronic ulcer, leprosy, leucoderma, urinary bladder disorders, burning sensation, oedema, and as a brain tonic. Timber economically very important.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Raashi vana

SHITHISARAKA

Botanical name: *Diospyros malabarica* (Ders.) Kostel.

Family: Ebenaceae

Kannada: Holethumri

Hindi: Gabha

English: Indian ebony, river ebony

Distribution: Found along river banks in coastal and southern interior Karnataka.

Description: Trees with spreading branches. Leaves oblong, obtuse or acute coriaceous, 19x6.5cm, basal nerves oblique and opposite; reticulate prominent. Inflorescence 1-many flowered cymes, 4-merous; calyx lobes in male broadly triangular, shorter or equal to tube, in female slightly shorter, corolla yellow, stamens 40 in pairs; anthers hairy, pistillode rudimentary. Ovary 8-celled, styles 4, each lobed into many stigma. Fruit to 4cm across; fruiting calyx large, reflexed, seeds 4-8 smooth; pulp viscid, turning black when exposed.

Flowering and fruiting: February and November

Medicinal properties and uses: Stem- astringent, fruit- astringent; seed. Stem for intermittent fever, dysentery; fruit for sore throat and aphthae; seed oil to remedy dysentery, diarrhea.

Religious Importance: Grown in Ashoka vana

SHREEGANDHA

Botanical Name: *Santalum album* L.

Family: Santalaceae

Kannada: Shreeghandha

Hindi: Chandan

English: Sandal wood tree

Distribution: Found in dry and scrub forests.

Description: Trees, initially parasites on trees. Leaves opposite or whorled, 8.5x4cm. Flowers bisexual; bracts caducous. Perianth lobes 4-5, triangular, valvate. Stamens 4-5, projecting between antitepalous lobes of disc. Ovary free at first, lateradnate to perianth at base, unilocular; ovules 2-3, pendulous on central column.

Flowering and fruiting: April and February

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Wood diuretic, diaphoretic, refrigerant, expectorant, dysuria; seed- abortifacient. Bark for malaria; wood for enlarged spleen and dysentery, tuberculosis of gall bladder; seed for skin diseases.

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja

SHWETHARKA

Botanical Name: *Calotropis procera* (Ait.) R.Br.

Family: Asclepiadaceae

Kannada: Bili aekka

Hindi: Akada

English: Swallow wort

Distribution: Found in most plain districts, usually in drier localities.

Description: Much branched tomentose shrub. Leaves opposite, simple, oblong, obtuse or acute, entire, cordate, grey tomentose on both sides. Inflorescence an axillary corymbose cyme. Calyx small, cup shaped or almost free to base; lobes ovate- acute, white, grey-tomentose outside; glandular within. Corolla broadly campanulate or rotate, white lobes 5, broad, ovate- acute; staminal corona of 5 fleshy compressed processes, tip mucous. Stamens with single pollinium in each cell, waxy, flattened. Ovary 2, free; ovules many stigma depressed, 5- lobed. Fruit a pair of recurved follicles upto 6 cm long; seeds obovate, hairy at top.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root; bark- diaphoretic, expectorant, emetic; latex, leaf, flower. Root for spleen complaints, elephantiasis, rheumatism; bark in dysentery; latex for leprosy; leaf for skin diseases; flower for asthma

Religious Importance: Navagraha vana, Shivapanchayathana vana

SINDHUVARA

Botanical Name: *Vitex negundo* L.

Family: Verbenaceae

Kannada: Karilakki, nirgundi

Hindi: Nirgunda

English: Five-leaved chaste, Indian privet

Distribution: Commonly found in Western ghats and Deccan regions.

Description: Large, silvery-tomentose shrub or small tree. Leaves 3-5 foliate, middle one slightly longer petiolulate, entire, lanceolate, acuminate, membranous. Panicles terminal, sometimes also from upper axils, to 15 cm with short, cymose branches. Flowers irregular, subsessile, 5-merous. Calyx cupular, toothed, subaccrescent. Corolla blue, lower lip distinctly larger. Ovary pilose at apex, at first imperfectly 2-locular, 4-ovulate, globular. Drupe globular, to 0.3 cm across.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- tonic, febrifuge, diuretic, expectorant, anthelmintic, demulcent; leaf- tonic, vermifuge; flower- astringent; seed; bark. Root for swelling of head; bark for postnatal complaints; leaf for inflammation of eye; flower for diarrhoea, liver complaints, skin diseases; seed for gout

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

STHoola PUSHPA

Botanical Name: *Tagetes erecta* L.

Family: Asteraceae

Kannada: Chendu hoovu

Hindi: Genda

English: Mary gold

Sacred Plants



Pinus roxburghii



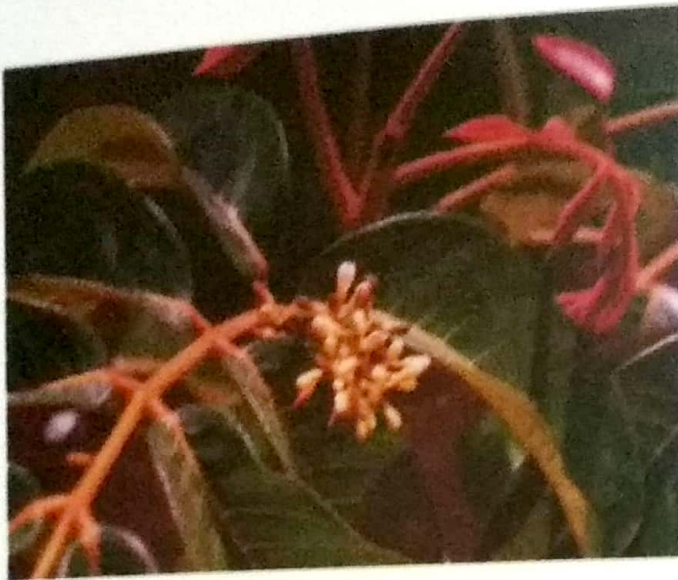
Chrysanthemum indicum



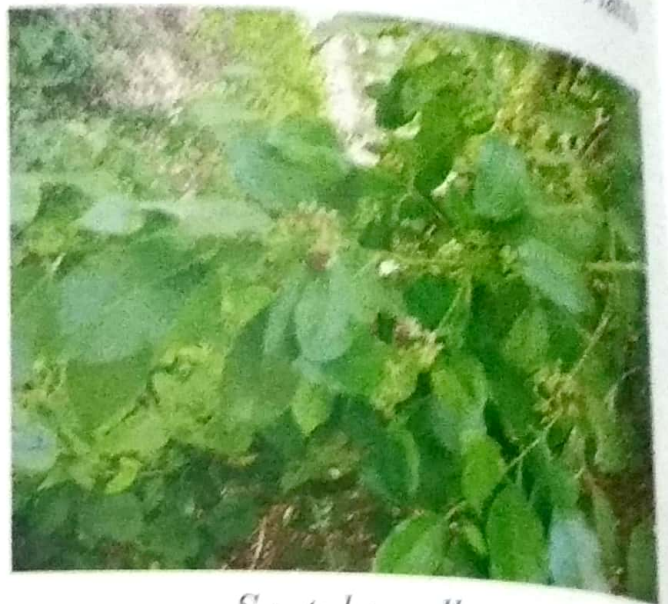
Dalbergia latifolia



Acacia ferruginea



Canarium strictum



Santalum album



Vitex negundo



Cinnamomum wightii

Sacred Plants



Polianthes tuberosa



Borassus flabellifer



Tagetes erecta



Hemidesmus indicus



Cinnamomum tamala



Calotropis procera



Diospyros malabarica

Distribution: A native of Mexico; often cultivated in gardens, sometimes a weed along roadsides.

Description: An erect herb. Leaves pinnate; leaflets 11-17, lanceolate, up to 5X1 cm, serratae, acute or acuminate at apex, glands few, near the margin and some tipped with a long weak awn. Heads solitary on swollen peduncles; involucre 1.7-2 cm long. Florets yellow to orange. Achenes blackish, 9 mm long; pappus scales united, with 1 or 2 long-awned scales and 2 or 3 shorter blunt ones.

Flowering and fruiting: October - December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf applied to carbuncles and boils; leaf juice for earache; flower to remedy eye diseases, ulcers; flower juice used for bleeding piles; flower taken as a blood purifier.

Religious Importance: Worshiped in all most all traditional poojas

SUGANDHARAJA

Botanical Name: *Polianthes tuberosa* L.

Family: Liliaceae

Kannada: Sugandha raaja

Hindi: Gulshabba

English: Tuberose

Distribution: Native of Mexico, much cultivated in gardens in the state.

Description: Tuberous perennial herb. Leaves radical or on the lower part of the stem. Flowers white fragrant, in long terminal simple racemes, perianth funnel-shaped.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- emetic, diuretic. Bulb for gonorrhoea

Religious Importance: Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

SUGANDHI

Botanical Name: *Hemidesmus indicus* (L.) R.Br.

Family: Asclepiadaceae

Kannada: Sogade baeru

Hindi: Anantmul

English: Indian sarsaparilla

Distribution: Commonly seen in all forests and waste lands.

Description: Twining wiry shrub. Leaves opposite or in whorls of 4. Flowers small, greenish- purple, in axillary oppsoite crowded subsessile cymes. Calyx 5- partite; lobes acuminate, with 5 minute scales at their bases within. Corolla rotate, deeply 5- fid, with valvate fleshy lobes; corolla scales 5, thick on corolla lobes and alternate with them. Stamens inserted at the base of corolla tube, ending in inflexed appendages; pollen- masses cohering in pairs in each cell. Ovary of 2 many - ovuled carpels; styles distinct, style apex 5- lobed, falt on top. Fruit of 2 slender divaricate terete follicular mericarps. Seeds oblong, falttened, ridged ventrally.

Flowering and fruiting: September and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root- diaphoretic, galactagogue; bark- nutritive. Root for stomach pain, fever, skin diseases, loss of appetite, syphilis and other venereal diseases, urinary complications, blood purifier, rheumatism; leaf as masticatory; whole plant for fever

Religious Importance: Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Saptharshi vana

SURAGI

Botanical Name: *Mammea suriga* (Buch-Ham.ex Roxb.)

Family: Clusiaceae

Kannada: Surgi

English: Alexandrian laurel

Distribution: Occasional along coast and also found in evergreen forests.

Description: Trees upto 10m height. Leaves coriaceous, acute at apex, subcordate at base 22x6.8cm petioles to 1.2 cm. Flowers in fascicles in axils of fallen leaves; pedicels to 1cm; bracts numerous, calyx bursting into two valves, inflexed during flowering. Rudimentary stamens many in pistillate flower. Berry obliquely ovoid, to 3.5cm.

Flowering and fruiting: February and April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Flower- carminative, stimulant, astringent. Flower for hemorrhoids, dyspepsia

Religious Importance: Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

SVETHAKANCHAN

Botanical name: *Bauhinia racemosa* Lam.

Family: Fabaceae-Caesalpinioideae

Kannada: Aaralu maandaar

Hindi: Ashta

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous to semi-evergreen forests in interior Karnataka.

Description: Deciduous trees. Leaf to 4x5cm, 1/3 cleft. Flowers many, lax. Receptacle short, to 0.5cm. Calyx spathaceous, toothed at apex. Petals white or fading yellow, narrowly oblanceolate. Stamens 10. Pod glabrous, turgid, somewhat falcate.

Flowering and fruiting: March and September

Medicinal Properties and Uses: Stem, leaf, flowers- laxative; bark-antiinflammatory, cholagogue. Stem used to treat glandular inflammations, ulcers, skin diseases, goitre, dysentery, blood purifier; leaf for diarrhea.

Religious Importance: Leaves of the plant worshiped during 'Dasara' festival in North-Eastern Karnataka.

SYANDANA

Botanical Name: *Ougenia oogieinensis* (Roxb.) Hochr.

Family: Fabaceae-Faboideae

Kannada: Kal mutthuga

Hindi: Kalaphulas

English: Charito tree

Distribution: Occasionally found in moist deciduous forests.

Description: Trees. Leaflets broadly ovate, 15x13cm, coriaceous, glabrous above, sparsely pubescent beneath. Pedicel 1.2-1.8cm long. Calyx 0.4-0.6cm long. Corolla white or rose, 1-1.2cm long. Pod 5-7.5cm long, 2-5 jointed, joints 2-3 times as long as broad.

Flowering and fruiting: February and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark- anthelmintic, astringent, febrifuge, vermifuge. Bark is used to treat dysentery, worm infestations, leucoderma, urinary discharges, ulcers, wounds, blood disorders, skin diseases, biliousness

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

TAALA

Botanical Name: *Borassus flabellifer* L.

Family: Arecaceae

Kannada: Thaale mara

Hindi: Tal

English: Palmyra palm

Distribution: Found in all distirct in wild or cultivated form.

Description: Large tree. Stem tall, stout. Leaves simple, palmately fan-shaped, plicate, the margin multifid, petioles spinous. Spadices dioecious, large, simply branched, peduncles sheathed with open spathes. Male flowers small, mixed with

scaly bracts, secund in 2 series in a small spikelets. Sepals 3, narrowly cuneate, imbricate. Petals 3, shorter, obovate-spathulate, imbricate. Stamens 6, anthers subsessile. Ovary globose, subtrigonus, entire or 3-4 partite, 3-4 celled, ovules basilar, erect, stigmas 3, sessile, recurved. Fruits a large subglobose drupe with 1-3 fibrous pyrenes, pericarp thinly fleshy. Seeds oblong, top 3-lobed.

Flowering and fruiting: Janaury and April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Heartwood, juice of plant- diuretic, anthelmintic, anti-phlegmatic, bulb of seedlings, petiole, flowers from male plant. Heartwood I menorrhagia; petiole in headache and strokes and earache, convulsions; bulb of seedlings- epilepsy; flowers from male plant in rheumatic pain, scabies, syphilis

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

TAMAALA

Botanical Name: *Cinnamomum tamala* (Buch.-Ham.) Nees et Eberm.

Family: Lauraceae

Kannada: Patraka

Hindi: Tejpat

English: Indian Bay leaf

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests of northern India

Description: It is a small to moderately sized ever green tree. The leaves of this tree is the spice having clove like taste and a faintly pepper like odour. The tree has height up to 7.5 mtr with zigzag branching, trunk up to 95 cm girth, bark rough, dark grey to reddish brown in colour.

Flowering and fruiting: March and July

Medicinal Properties & Uses: It is widely used in pharmaceutical preparations because of its hypoglycemic, stimulant and carminative properties. It is also used in Indian system of traditional medicines.

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

THILAKA

Botanical name: *Cinnamomum wightii* Meis.

Family: Lauraceae

Kannada: Kaadu daalchini

English: Country cinnamon

Distribution: Rarely found in Western ghats.

Description: Small tree. Petiole to 1.5 cm long; leaf blade broadly elliptic-ovate acute at apex, rounded at base, glabrous-white and pubescent beneath. Panicle to 7.5 cm long, fulvous-tomentose. Perianth lobes deciduous in fruit. Berry oblong or ovoid, to 1 cm long.

Flowering and fruiting: April and June

Medicinal properties and uses: Bark, leaves and oil used to treat paralytic disorder, deficiency in digestive power, abdominal disorders, cough, dysuria and gynaecological disorders. Tender fruits, including stalk and calyx, are astringent, aromatic, stimulant and carminative.

Religious Importance: Grown in Ashoka vana

TILAKA

Botanical Name: *Symplocos racemosa* Roxb.

Family: Symplocaceae

Kannada: Bala loddi, lodhra

Hindi: Lodh

English: Lodh tree

Distribution: Found in semi-evergreen forests of ghats of Bababudan hills.

Description: Trees to 15m. Leaves elliptic-oblong, acute acuminate, cuneate to rounded, glabrous, with 8-11 pairs of nerves, 8-16x3-6.5cm. Racemes axillary 8

18cm; bracts to 5x3mm. Calyx lobes 2x1mm, ovate obtuse glabrous or sparsely ciliate and appressed pubescent. Ovary 1mm long. Drupe glabrous, ellipsoid to ovoid, usually 20-celled 1-1.5 x 0.6cm, endocarp smooth.

Flowering and fruiting: October and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Bark for bronchitis, urinary disorders, eye diseases, liver trouble, elephantiasis

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

TINDUKA

Botanical Name: *Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb.

Family: Ebenaceae

Kannada: Tumbri,

Hindi: Temru

English: Coromandel ebony, malabar ebony

Distribution: Commonly found in all dry deciduous forests, on rocky hills and waste lands.

Description: Deciduous trees with branches fulvous tomentose. Leaves alternate, opposite or sub opposite, elliptic or oblong, to 14x7.5cm. Inflorescence 1-many flowered cymes, male flowers in short cymes. Female solitary, calyx 4-5 lobed, lobes in male acute in female cordate, corolla lobes 5, densely hairy without. Stamens 14-20. Ovary 8-celled, styles 4. Fruit globose pubescent when young, yellow when ripe 3.5 cm across.

Flowering and fruiting: August and February

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Fruit- germicidal. Seed for dysentery

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

TULASI

Botanical Name: *Ocimum sanctum* L.

Family: Lamiaceae

Kannada: Hala thulasi

Hindi: Kali-tulsi

English: Hoary basil

Distribution: Occasional across plains and upper ghats.

Description: Herbs. Leaves ovate or obovate, cuneate-truncate, to 1.5 X 1 cm, membranous. Raceme 10-15 cm long, pedicels 1-2 cm long. Calyx villous. Corolla white. Nutlets mucilaginous when wetted.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf; seed- diuretic, tonic, cooling; whole plant. Leaf decoction for dysentery; whole plant decoction for cough, mouthwash

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja, Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Saptharshi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Shivapanchayathana vana, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja

UDDAALAKA

Botanical Name: *Cordia dichotoma* Willd

Family: Boraginaceae

Kannada: Challe hannu

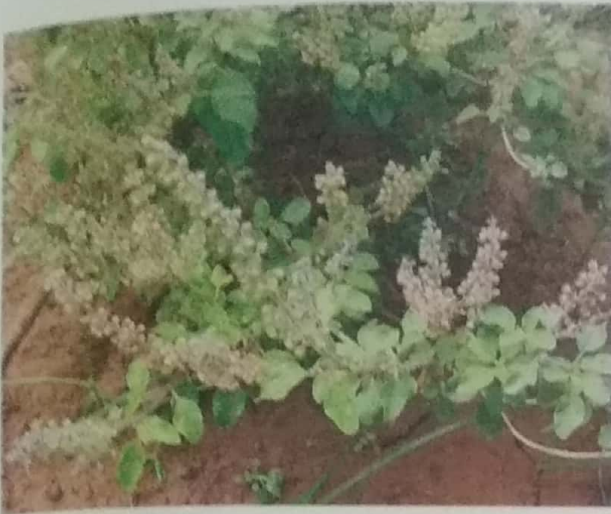
Hindi: Bhairala

English: Sebesten plum

Distribution: Found in dry deciduous forests and bunds and in waste places of the state.



Sacred Plants



Ocimum americanum



Symplocos racemosa

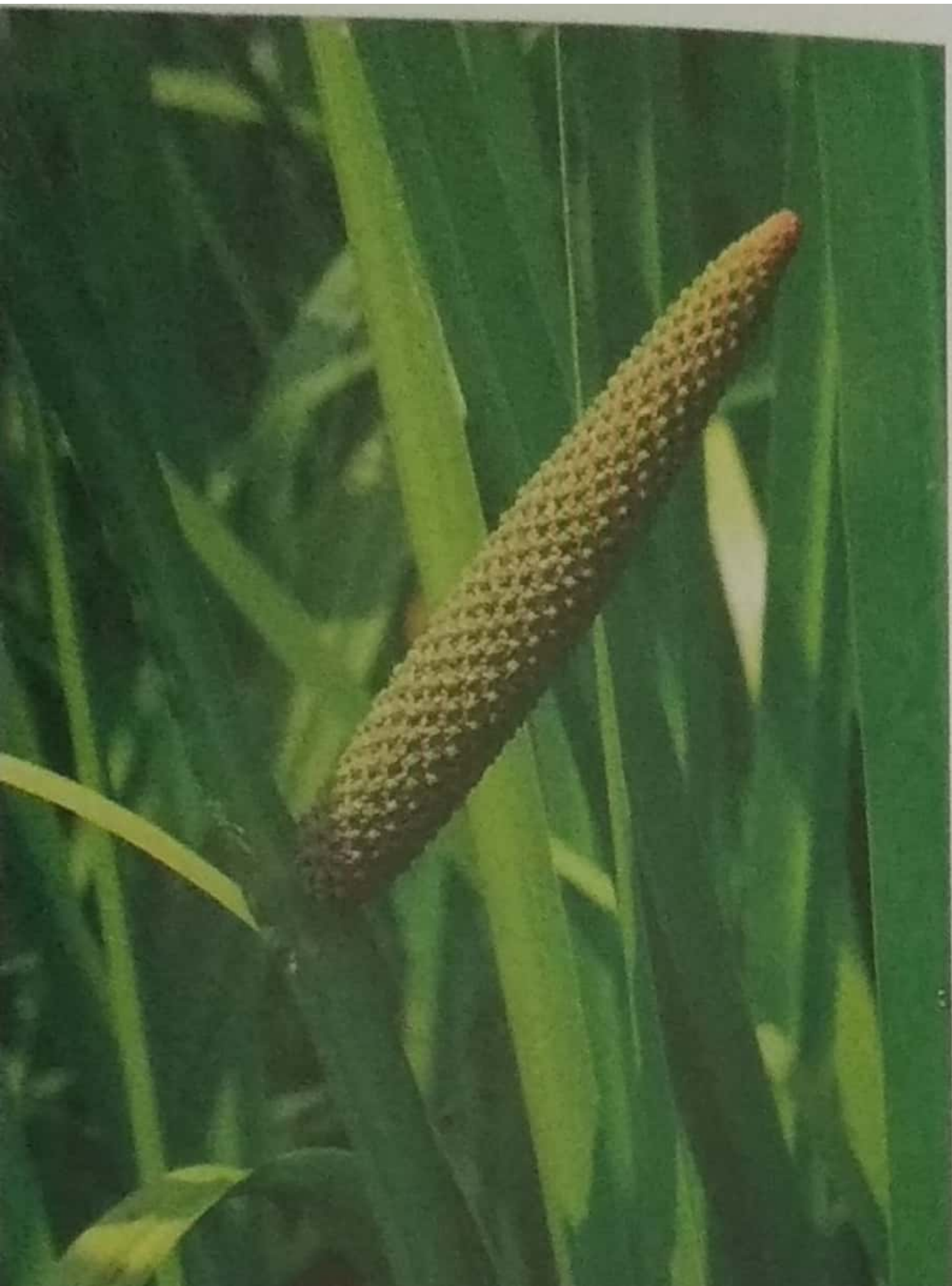


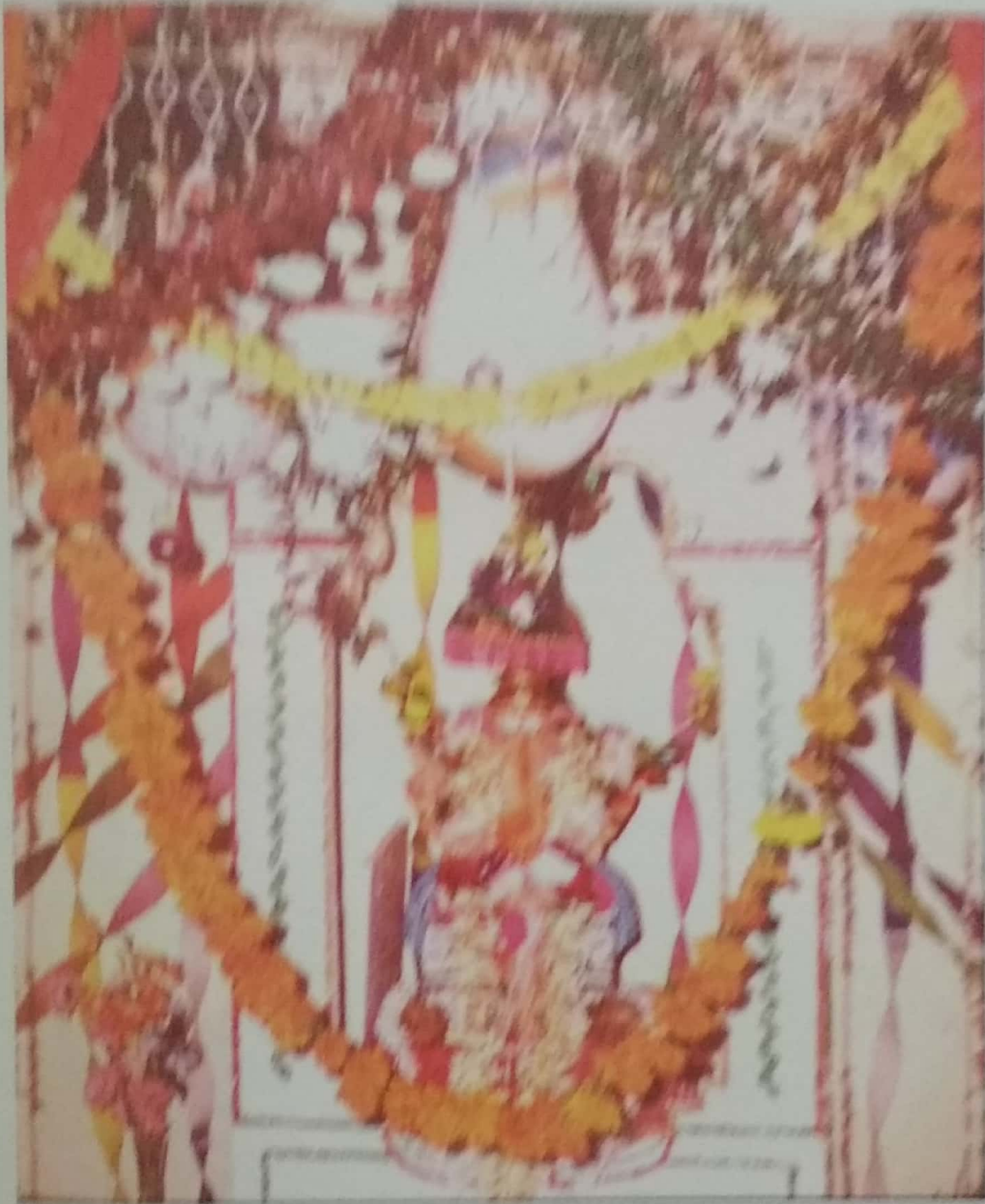
Cordia dichotoma



Diospyros melanoxylon







Vinayaka Chaturthi



Sathyanarayana Swami Puja



Dasara (Ayudha Puja)

Description: Deciduous tree. Leaves alternate, simple, broadly ovate, obtuse, coarsely dentate, coriaceous. Flowers in terminal dichotomously branched cymose panicles, polygamous. Calyx campanulate, glabrous, but pubescent inside; lobes 5, shallow. Corolla tubular, white, as long as the calyx; lobes oblong, obtuse, recurved; equalling the tube in length. Stamens 5, epipetalous; filaments hairy at base. Fruit a drupe, ovoid, pinkish at first, later turning black, minutely rugose, apiculate, pulpy, sticky.

Flowering and fruiting: March and May

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf, fruit- anthelmintic, bechic, astringent, expectorant. Fruits for diseases of chest and urethra, stomach ache, urinary diseases and lung diseases; leaf for fever, cough, cold, ulcers

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana

VACHA

Botanical Name: *Acorus calamus* L.

Family: Araceae

Kannada: Baje

Hindi: Bach

English: Sweet flag

Distribution: Cultivated in Bangalore, Mysore, Mandya, Tumkur districts for commercial purpose.

Description: A perennial terrestrial herb of marshy places. Leaves two-ranked, distichous, sword shaped, erect, sharp pointed, closely sheathing each other, midrib stout, striate parallel venation, glabrous, weakly differentiated into petiole and blade. Spadix scapes 3-angled, keeled on the back, spathe leaf-like long, green, narrow, spadix dense, cylindrical, on a leaf like peduncle. Spike-like appearing lateral on the scape. Flowers bisexual, trimerous, compactly arranged, greenish yellow. Perianth 6 in 2 whorls 3 + 3, all stamens fertile, ditheous. Ovary 3-celled, syncarpus, ovule few, stigma sessile and punctate, fruiting rare.

Flowering and fruiting: February and June

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Rhizome bitter tonic, emetic, antispasmodic, carminative, sedative, nerve stimulant, analgesic; root- vermifuge; whole plant- sedative, analgesic. Rhizome for cough, cold, promotes bronchial secretion, useful in asthma, diarrhoea, leprosy, consumption; Stem for cough and cold; root in intermittent fever; whole plant depressant for blood pressure, respiration, body pain.

Religious Importance: Worshipped by Christians

VAMSHA

Botanical Name: *Bambusa arundinacea* (Retz.) Roxb.

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Bidhiru

Hindi: Bams

English: Bamboo

Distribution: Found growing in dry and evergreen forests.

Description: A large thorny shrub species of great commercial utility. Internodes hollow. Culm sheath broad, triangular, 3 cm wide at base; ligule narrow with white hairs; blade trigonous, scabrous brown on the inside. Pseudopanicule of spikelets in heads, in spicate branclets or paniculate spikes. Spikelets with 1- many fertile flowers, supported by 1-3 empty glumes. Lemmas oblong, usually mucronate; the palea 2 keeled; keels ciliate or not. Lodicules 3, membranous, ciliate; stamens 6. Ovary hairy at tip; style short or elongated; stigmas 1-3 plumose.

Flowering and fruiting: March and March

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Leaf- blood purifier; seeds- alexiteric, aphrodisiac. Leaves to treat leucoderma and inflammatory conditions, strangury; seeds to treat blood diseases, tuberculosis, bronchitis, leprosy, jaundice, anaemia

Religious Importance: Nakshathra vana

VANJALA

Botanical Name: *Calamus rotang* L.

Family: Arecaceae

Kannada: Nagabettha

Hindi: Vetas

English: Cane, Chair-botton cane

Distribution: Found in Western ghats near streams and rivers.

Description: A tall slender climber. Leaf sheath and its spines glabrous. Spines of leaf sheath tumescent above, holowed below; ochrea short, truncate. Petiole very short or obsolete. Primary spathe tubular, the lowest acute let 2 edged smooth or armed at the sides with straight spines, the upper slightly widened upwards, flat at the base on the inner face, armed on the back with strongish claws. Fruit globose or slightly longer than the wide, very faintly channelled, light straw yellow coloured, the apex sometimes reddish brown, the margins closely toothed.

Flowering and fruiting: November and December

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Root-antidote. Root for chronic fevers; leaf for biliousness

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana

VATA

Botanical Name: *Ficus benghalensis* L.

Family: Moraceae

Kannada: Aaladamara

Hindi: Bargat

English: Banyan tree

Distribution: Found in all parts.

Description: Large trees with numerous aerial roots. Leaf blade elliptic ovate-lanceolate, obtuse at apex, rounded at base, to 12x8cm, glabrescent, coriaceous, with 5-7 basal nerves; lateral nerves 4-6 pairs, indistinct above. Figs in axillary pairs, sessile, globular, silky-pubescent, bright red when ripe, to 2cm across.

Flowering and fruiting: December and April

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Aerial root, latex, leaf, stipules. Aerial roots for diarrhoea; latex for tooth ache, pain in gums, boils and blisters, for spermatorrhoea; leaf on cuts and injuries; stipules for snake bite

Religious Importance: Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja, Raashi vana, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja

VENU

Botanical Name: *Ochlandra travancorica* Benth. ex Gamble

Family: Poaceae

Kannada: Hodake

English: Elephant grass

Distribution: Found in evergreen forests of Western ghats, it covered large area with dense in the forests.

Description: Woody shrubs. Culms erect, internodes rather long, thin walled. Leaves many veined, 6-18"x2-4.5" margins cartilaginous; sheath striate fringed. Inflorescence of spikes or spicate panicles terminating leafy branches; spikelets 1-1.7", some fertile, some sterile. Lemma similar to the upper most glume, mucronate; paleas membranous, not keeled, lodicules 1- several, conspicuous, variable. Ovary narrow. Style long; stigmas 4-6 grain large or very large, ovoid, long beaked, supported by the persistent glumes; pericarp very thick.

Flowering and fruiting: November and December

Religious Importance: Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja

VIKANTHAKA

Botanical Name: *Flacourtia montana* Graham.

Family: Flacourtiaceae

Kannada: hennu sampige

Hindi: Ataka

Distribution: Found in the forests of Western ghats, not common.

Description: Large tree. Leaves elliptic, oblong, acuminate, crenate serrate, 8-15x4-6cm. Flowers unisexual. Tepals white. Berry fleshy, globose turning, red with age, few seeded.

Flowering and fruiting: July and September

Religious Importance: Ashoka vana, Nakshathra vana

VISHNUKRANTHI

Botanical Name: *Evolvulus alsinoides* (L.) L.

Family: Convolvulaceae

Kannada: Vishnu kranthi soppu

Hindi: Visnukranta

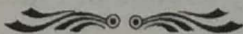
Distribution: Found in drier areas.

Description: Herbs with woody root stock and many, prostrate, slender, spreading branches. Leaves lanceolate- orbicular, 0.6-1x0.20.6cm. Peduncle axillary, slender, 1-3 floowered. Sepals ovate, to 0.3cm long. Corolla to 0.6cm long, blue. Ovary usually bilocular, 4- ovuled; styles 2, free , each with 2 linea rstigmas. Fruit a capsule.

Flowering and fruiting: All season

Medicinal Properties & Uses: Whole plant- febrifuge, vermifuge. Leaf for asthma, bronchitis, effective on central nervous system

Religious Importance: Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja, Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja, Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja, Somavara vratha - pathra pooja, Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja, Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja.



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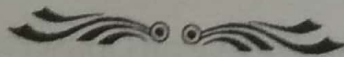
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<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
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<i>Saccharum spontaneum</i>	46	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	112
<i>Santalum album</i>	110	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	49
<i>Saraca asoca</i>	34	<i>Wrightia tinctoria</i>	55
<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i>	25	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	38

Anathapadmanabha vratha - pathra pooja

Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Arjuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	33
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Brungaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	42
Chootha	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Devadaaru	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	48
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Drona	<i>Luecas cephalotes</i>	50
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Maachi	<i>Artimisia nilagirica</i>	79
Maruga	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	84
Shathapathra	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108
Shreegandha	<i>Santalum album</i>	110
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	128

Anathapadmanabha vratha - pushpa pooja

Athasi	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L.	36
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i> L.	38
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i> L.	43
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus fascicularis</i> Lam.	73
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i> (N.Burm.) Andr.	75

Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pathra pooja

Amra	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Ashoka	<i>Saraca asoca</i>	34
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Brungaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	42
Jataadhaara	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	60
Kadali	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	64
Kapittha	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	68
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Navalli	<i>Piper betel</i>	90
Oudumbara	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	93
Palaasha	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	96
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Vata	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i>	123

Nrusimha jayanthi vratha - pushpa pooja

Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Champakaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Dattura	<i>Datura fastuosa</i>	47
Girikarnika	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	52
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Kalhara	<i>Nymphaea nouchali</i>	67
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus fascicularis</i>	73
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	75
Maalathi	<i>Jasminum aungustifolium</i>	82
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Padma	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Shathapathra	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108

Rushipanchami vratha - pathra pooja

Agasthya	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i>	25
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Dattura	<i>Datura fastuosa</i>	47
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120

Rushipanchami vratha - pushpa pooja

Athasi	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	36
Kumudha	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	75
Maalathi	<i>Jasminum aungustifolium</i>	82
Maaga	<i>Areca catechu</i>	81
Sugandhi	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	114
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120

Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pathra pooja

Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Arka	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	33
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Bruhathi	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	41
Brungaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	42
Chootha	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Jambeera	<i>Ocimum gratissimum</i>	58
Jamboo	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	59
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Maachi	<i>Artimisia indica</i>	79
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Maruvaka	<i>Origanum majorana</i>	85
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	125

Sankasta chaturthi vratha - pushpa pooja

Arjuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	33
Arka	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	33
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Girikarnika	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	52
Kaanchana	<i>Toddalia asiatica</i>	62
Kadamba	<i>Anthocephalus kadamba</i>	65
Kalhara	<i>Nymphaea nouchali</i>	67
Kapittha	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	68
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus odoratissimus</i>	73
Maalathi	<i>Jasminum aungustifolium</i>	82
Nimba	<i>Cetrus aurantifolia</i>	92
Paatali	<i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i>	94
Padma	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Parijaatha	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>	97
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Shathapathra	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108

Sathyanarayana vratha - pathra pooja

Amalaka	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	27
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Badari	<i>Zizyphus zujuba</i>	38
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Chootha	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Devadaaru	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	48
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Iruvanthika	<i>Jasminum sambac</i>	57
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Kamala	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Karaveera	<i>Nerium nilagirica</i>	68
Maachi	<i>Artimisia indica</i>	79
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Maruga	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	84
Parijaatha	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>	97
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysanthemum indicum</i>	106
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vata	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i>	123
Venu	<i>Ochlandra travancorica</i>	124
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	125

Sathyanarayana vratha - pushpa pooja

Ashoka	<i>Saraca asoca</i>	34
Athasi	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	36
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Devadaaru	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	48
Girikarnika	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	52
Iruvanthika	<i>Jasminum sambac</i>	57
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Kalhara	<i>Nymphaea nouchali</i>	67
Kamala	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus fascicularis</i>	73
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	82
Maalathi	<i>Jasminum aungustifolium</i>	82
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Mandaara	<i>Bauhinia purpurea</i>	84
Paatali	<i>Stereospermum suaveolens</i>	94
Parijaatha	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>	97
Pooga	<i>Areca catechu</i>	81
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysanthemum indicum</i>	106
Shathapathra	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108
Sugandharaja	<i>Polyanthes tuberosa</i>	113

Somavara vratha - pathra pooja

Amalaka	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	27
Amla	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	29
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Badari	<i>Zizyphus zujuba</i>	38
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Bruhathi	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	41
Brungaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	42
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Devadaaru	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	48
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Japaa	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	59
Kamala	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Kuruvaka	<i>Barleria prionitis</i>	77
Maruga	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	84
Nirgundi	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	112
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysanthemum indicum</i>	106
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	125

Somavara vratha - pushpa pooja

Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Athasi	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	36
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Girikarnika	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	52
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Japaa	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	59
Kalhara	<i>Nymphaea nouchali</i>	67
Kamala	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Kuruvaka	<i>Barleria prionitis</i>	77
Maadhav	<i>Jasminum arborescens</i>	80
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Nadyaavanda	<i>Tabernaemontana heyneana</i>	86
Nilotphala	<i>Nymphaea lotus</i>	90
Parijaatha	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>	97
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysanthemum indicum</i>	106
Shathapathra	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108
Sindhuvaara	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	112
Suragi	<i>Mammea suriga</i>	114

Swarnagouri vratha - pathra pooja

Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Kasturika	<i>Abelmoschus moschatus</i>	71
Maachi	<i>Artimisia nilagiraca</i>	79
Maruga	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	84
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysnathimum indicum</i>	106
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120

Swarnagouri vratha - pushpa pooja

Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Girikarnika	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	52
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Kamala	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus fascicularas</i>	73
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Parijaatha	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>	97
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysnathimum indicum</i>	106

Varamahalakshmi vratha - pathra pooja

Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Maachi	<i>Artimisia niligirica</i>	79
Maruga	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	84
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysnathimum indicum</i>	106
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	125

Varamahalakshmi vratha - pushpa pooja

Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Maaga	<i>Areca catechu</i>	81
Mallika	<i>Jasminum officinale</i>	83
Nilotphala	<i>Nymphaea lotus</i>	90
Padma	<i>Nelumbo nucifera</i>	95
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Sevanthika	<i>Chrysnathimum indicum</i>	106

Vinayaka chaturthi vratha - patra pooja

Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Arjuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	33
Arka	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	33
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Badari	<i>Zizyphus zujuba</i>	38
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Bruhathi	<i>Solanum indicum</i>	41
Chootha	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Daadima	<i>Punica granatum</i>	46
Dattura	<i>Datura fastuosa</i>	47
Devadaaru	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	48
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Ganaki	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	51
Jaaji	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	57
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Maachi	<i>Artimisia indica</i>	79
Maruvaka	<i>Origanum majorana</i>	85
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Sindhuvaara	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	122
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120
Vishnukranthi	<i>Evolvulus alsinoides</i>	125

Ashoka vana

Amalaka	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	27
Amra	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Ankola	<i>Alangium salvifolium</i>	31
Ashoka	<i>Saraca asoca</i>	34
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Champaka	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	43
Chandana	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	100
Hinthala	<i>Phoenix paludosa</i>	55
Kadamba	<i>Anthocephalus chinensis</i>	65
Kakkola	<i>Luvunga sarmentosa</i>	66
Kapittha	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	68
Karaveera	<i>Nerium indicum</i>	68
Karnikaara	<i>Pterospermum acerifolium</i>	70
Kathaka	<i>Strychnos potatorum</i>	72
Kethaki	<i>Pandanus fascicularis</i>	73
Kruthamaala	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	75
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	75
Kutaja	<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i>	77
Lavanga	<i>Syzygium aromaticum</i>	78
Likucha	<i>Artocarpus gomezianus</i>	79

Maruvaka	<i>Origanum majorana</i>	85
Nagakesara	<i>Mesua ferrea</i>	87
Oudumbara	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	93
Paatali	<i>Stereospermum chelonoides</i>	94
Palaasha	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	96
Panasa	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	97
Priyaalu	<i>Buchanania lanzon</i>	99
Punnaaga	<i>Calophyllum inophyllum</i>	99
Raktachandana	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	100
Rasaala	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i>	101
Saala	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	102
Sarala	<i>Pinus roxburghii</i>	105
Shimshupa	<i>Dalbergia latifolia</i>	109
Syandana	<i>Ougeinia dalbergioides</i>	116
Shithisaraka	<i>Diospyros malabarica</i>	109
Taala	<i>Borassus flabellifera</i>	116
Tamaala	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	117
Tilaka	<i>Symplocos racemosa</i>	118
Thilaka	<i>Cinnamomum wightii</i>	118
Tinduka	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>	119
Uddaalaka	<i>Cordia dichotoma</i>	120
Vanjala	<i>Calamus rotanga</i>	123
Vethasa	<i>Calamus rotanga</i>	123
Vikanthaka	<i>Flacourtia montana</i>	125

Nakshathra vana

Ambasta	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	28
Amra	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Arjuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	33
Arka	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	33
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Badari	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	38
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Daathri	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	27
Jamboo	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	59
Kaarasyara	<i>Strychnos nux-vomica</i>	63
Kadamba	<i>Anthocephalus chinensis</i>	65
Kadhira	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	65
Krushnaa	<i>Piper longum</i>	74
Madhuca	<i>Madhuca latifolia</i>	82
Nagakesara	<i>Mesua ferrea</i>	87
Nimba	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	91
Oudumbara	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	83
Palaasha	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	96
Panasa	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	97
Plaksha	<i>Ficus virens</i>	98
Raktchandana	<i>Ptetocarpus Santalinus</i>	100

Rohini	<i>Soymida febrifuga</i>	102
Sarala	<i>Pinus roxiburghii</i>	105
Sarju	<i>Canarium strictum</i>	106
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Vamsha	<i>Bambusa arundinaceae</i>	122
Vanjala	<i>Calamus rotanga</i>	123
Vikanthaka	<i>Flacourtia montana</i>	125

Nandana vana

Chootha	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Jamboo	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	59
Kadamba	<i>Anthocephalus chinensis</i>	65
Nimba	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	91
Sarala	<i>Pinus roxiburghii</i>	105
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Darba	<i>Saccharum spontaneum</i>	46
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Kadhira	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	81
Oudumbara	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	93
Palaasha	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	96
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Shwetharka	<i>Calotropis procera</i>	111

Navagraha vana

Adhaki	Cajanus cajan	25
Apamarga	Achyranthes aspera	31
Ashwatha	Ficus religiosa	36
Chanaka	Cicer arietinum	44
Darba	Saccharum spontenum	46
Doorva	Cyanodon dactylon	49
Khadhira	Acacia catechu	65
Oudumbara	Ficus racemosa	93
Palaasha	Butea monosperma	96
Shami	Acacia ferrugenia	107
Shwetharka	Calotropis procera	111

Raashi vana

Amra	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	45
Ashwattha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	36
Bakula	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	38
Kadhira	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	65
Paatali	<i>Stereospermum chelonoides</i>	94
Palaasha	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	96
Panasa	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	97
Raktachandana	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	100
Sapthaparni	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	104
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Shimshupa	<i>Dalbergia latifolia</i>	109
Vata	<i>Ficus bengalensis</i>	123

Saptharshi vana

Agasthya	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i>	26
Apaamarga	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	31
Athasi	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	36
Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	41
Dattura	<i>Datura stramonium</i>	47
Doorva	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	49
Kumudha	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i>	108
Kundha	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	75
Maalathi	<i>Jasminum aungustifolium</i>	82
Pooga	<i>Areca catechu</i>	81
Shami	<i>Acacia ferruginea</i>	107
Sugandhi	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	114
Tulasi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	120

Shivapanchiyata Vana

Ashoka	Saraca asoca	34
Ashwatha	Ficus religiosa	36
Bilva	Aegle marmelos	41
Doorva	Cyanodon dactylon	49
Drona	Leucas cephalotes	50
Girikarnika	Clitoria ternate	52
Kadhira	Acacia catechu	65
Karaveera	Nerium oleander	68
Shwetharka	Calotropis procera	111
Tulasi	Ocimum sanctum	120
Tulasi Pooja		
Aravata	Citrus reticulata	32

Worshipped by Buddhist

Holoptelia Integrifolia	44
Wrightia tinctoria	55

Worshipped by Christians

Juglans regia	27
Ficus carica	30
Vitis vinifera	49
Typha angustata	53
Nardostachys jatamansi	61
Diospyros ebony	73
Crocos sativus	76
Lawsonia inermis	88
Arundo donax	88
Acorus calamus	121

Worshipped by Muslims

Phoenix dactylifera	69
Lawsonia inermis	88

Sri. Balakrishna Gowda, Associate Professor of Botany in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. He obtained Masters Degree in Botany from Central College, Bangalore and Ph.D. degree in Botany from Gulbarga University. Professor Gowda was initiated as a researcher in Botany under the guidance of Prof. G.Boraiah at the University of Agricultural Sciences. He undertook extensive studies on various aspects of medicinal plants of Karnataka in particular and peninsular India in general. His activities span across the study of biological diversity of Karnataka encompassing the higher plants with emphasis on medicinal plants of economic and ecological importance. The studies on the hill top grasslands of Western Ghats earned him the doctoral degree. The study has provided insight to intricate relationship between soil, microorganisms and plants in maintaining the fragile Western Ghat vegetation. He was closely associated with activities of developmental departments of the state like Forest and Horticulture and provided inputs for establishment of medicinal plant gardens in the state. A keen observer of nature and a photographer has prepared photographic atlas of plants and landscapes of Karnataka.

Prof. Gowda was one of the persons responsible for developing Karnataka Biodiversity System in collaboration with Karnataka Forest Department and Indian Space Research Organisation.

In association with the Indian Space Research Organisation, Biodiversity characterization maps of vegetation of Western Ghats of Karnataka and Little Andaman Island were prepared using remote sensing and GIS. He has published several research papers, articles and chapters for books on contemporary topics. He has written books and prepared reports for use of the state and the common man. "Oshadi Kosha and "Vanaspathi Kosha" are two important works supported and published by Kalpatharu Research Academy. He is currently engaged in bringing out fascicles on traditional medicinal species, horticulture and forestry species for registering Geographic indications, Genetic diversity studies of threatened species to support conservation requirements.